AUGUST 1952

COMMENTARY

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The Chances of a Mao-Stalin Rift — FRANZ BORKENAU
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The Study of Man—
What Do We Know About the Soviet Economy? — NICOLAS SPULBER

BOOKS IN REVIEW

George N. Shuster — Eduard Heimann — Emil L. Fackenheim
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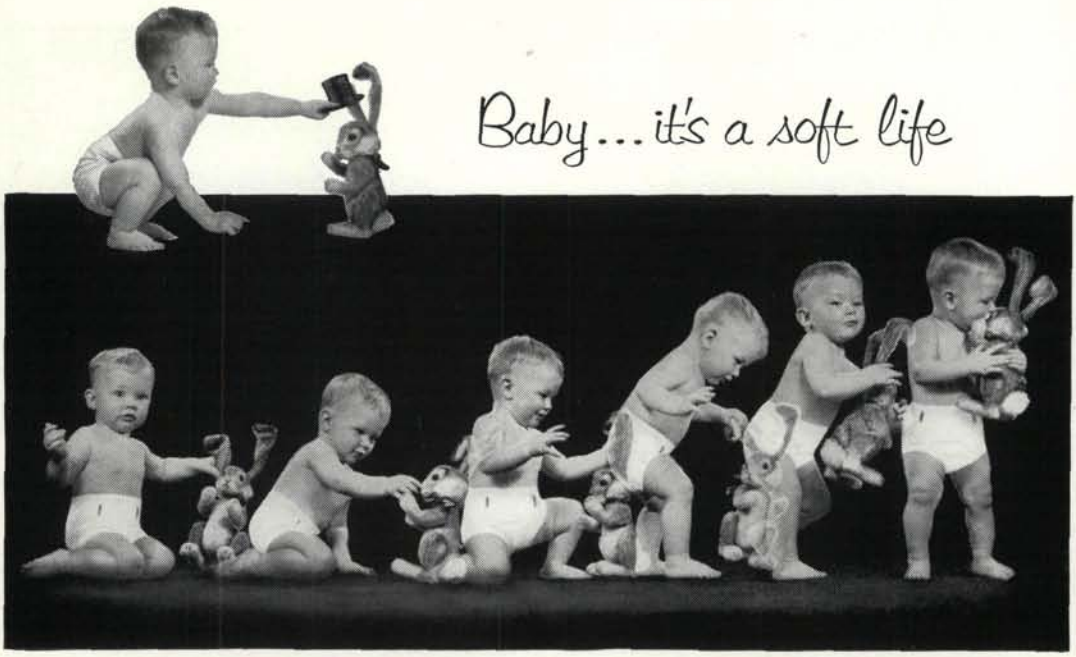

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

COMMENTARY

In Search of a Near Eastern Policy *Hal Lehrman*

The situation in the Near East daily becomes more critical, and there are signs of a growing Soviet-Arab *rapprochement* – and the West looks to our State Department for some clear lead. Hal Lehrman visits Washington in an effort to discover the pattern of U. S. policy in this troubled area.

Modigliani's Youth *Alfred Werner*

The figure of the great Italian Jewish artist – one of the luminaries of the School of Paris – has been obscured by countless legends invented to overcome the want of facts. Mr. Werner turns up new and authentic information, more interesting if less spectacular than the fables.

Civil Liberties: A British View *Richard H. S. Crossman*

Englishmen have been noticeably less agitated than Americans about the problem of Communist influence in public life. Is this mere blindness, as some have claimed, or the deeper wisdom of a more mature society? Mr. Crossman, Labor Member of Parliament, tells why he thinks a democratic society has nothing to fear from free Communist agitation.

What Kind of FEPC? *Herbert R. Northrup*

The issue of compulsory versus voluntary fair employment practices legislation has agitated both political conventions, but in neither has there been much discussion of the practical impact of the fair employment practices legislation of various types now in force in a number of states. Mr. Northrup discusses the relative merits of compulsion as against education.

Mr. Big Moves to Greener Pastures *S. T. Hecht*

"When the richest man, the outstanding personality, the *primum mobile* of the community takes it into his head to move out of town, the repercussions are bound to be both wide and irrepressible." So begins this tale of the great disaster which struck the Jewish community of Reedville – and just before the beginning of the UJA campaign, too.

What is Totalitarianism? *Paul Kecskemeti*

The most important political phenomenon of our time has received surprisingly little attention as such – perhaps because the particular characteristics of its two major variants, German Nazism and Russian Communism, have been of more interest to observers than the common elements underlying both. Paul Kecskemeti seeks to differentiate totalitarianism as a system of power from others, like despotism and slavery, that it so much resembles.

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COMMENTARY

STORM CLOUDS OVER THE BOLIVIAN REFUGE

South America's New Pattern of Anti-Semitism

SHERRY MANGAN

COCHABAMBA

THE Jewish communities of Bolivia, founded in flight from Hitlerian anti-Semitism, are less than twenty years old, yet the chill wind of fear of a new anti-Semitism has already passed over them. Now that a new revolutionary regime is in power there, the question is raised in urgent accents: is Bolivia an ultimate safe haven, or just one more brief anchorage in a wandering that began in 1933?

THE recent rise of anti-Semitism in Latin American countries has disturbed Jews all over the world, but its causes and accompanying factors still remain largely veiled by a general lack of knowledge of the social and political conflicts which underlie the new threat. SHERRY MANGAN, a frequent contributor to COMMENTARY, has lived in Bolivia for the past year, experiencing the situation at first hand. He also knows Argentina, having worked there as correspondent for the Luce magazines after his expulsion from Paris, where he was chief of the *Time* bureau, by the Germans in August 1940. Mr. Mangan was born in Lynn, Massachusetts, in 1904, and has spent most of his time since leaving Harvard abroad, chiefly in Paris. A poet as well as a journalist, he was one of the editors of a famous little magazine of the early 1930's, *Pagany*, and contributed to many other avant-garde publications. Since 1947, he has been a free-lance journalist. His most recent appearance in COMMENTARY was in February 1950 with an article on the postwar spread of psychoanalysis in France.

Though not till this century were there enough Jews there to resist assimilation, forced or voluntary, and form communities, Jews have been in Bolivia almost since its settlement. Numerous Marranos (Spanish and Portuguese Jews who were forcibly converted in the 16th century) were among the pioneers who, in 1557, under Ñuflo de Chávez, hacked their way six hundred miles north from Asunción del Paraguay deep into eastern Bolivia and there founded the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra. Other Marranos, finding continued discrimination in La Paz and Potosí, flocked to Santa Cruz because it was the established city farthest from the meddling authorities. Thus, ironically, many of the most Catholic of Santa Cruz's old families are of Jewish descent without in the least being aware of it. Only rare traces remain: travelers report seeing seven-branched candlesticks among treasured family heirlooms, or some vestigial remnant of kosher food practices conserved simply as a family tradition.

The next immigration was not till 1871. A handful of French Jews from Alsace, dislodged by the Franco-Prussian War, and of German Jews from Prussia, penetrated to this remote republic, and such names as Levy, Rothmann, and Juding began to appear in Bolivian public records. They were too few to form a community, however, and within

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a generation had all been absorbed into the prevailing Spanish Catholic culture.

During the next fifty years, Jews came to the country only in rare and isolated cases, most of them men filled with a spirit of adventure, yet the names Weil, Gabriel, and Freudenthal began to appear in the lists of influential citizens. It took another European convulsion, World War I and the Russian Revolution, to send a new wave of Jews to Latin America—usually to Argentina, and it was from there that a few venturesome souls pushed on to Bolivia. They too might all have been assimilated—as, indeed, many were—except for the rise of Hitler and the spread of anti-Semitism in Poland. The more foresighted Jews in Central and Eastern Europe began pulling out; a few reached Bolivia; and by May 1935 it was possible to organize an Israelite Circle (Círculo Israelita) in La Paz with thirty families.

But mass immigration took place only in 1938-39. The harried Joint Distribution Committee, forced to find immediate refuge for scores of thousands, performed wonders. And not the least wonderful was to discover that the government of Colonel Germán Busch—himself of German descent and authoritarian mentality but, as it happened, no anti-Semite—would, almost alone among South American governments, issue visas to Jews *en masse*. From late 1938 till mid-1939, 12,000 Jewish refugees came from Europe into hospitable Bolivia. Of these, 4,000 were transit cases, already booked to continue on to bordering countries; the other 8,000 were to make Bolivia their home.

Some fortunate ones came to Bolivia direct from Germany in the relative comfort of the *Leipzig* or the *Patria;* others, sailing from France, fared not too ill on the *Colombo;* but thousands—2,400 on each voyage—suffered the misery of an ignoble Italian transport under ghastly hygienic conditions. The welcoming countries were more well-intentioned than technically prepared: in Chilean Arica, the refugees were housed in barracks; in Bolivian La Paz, in the jail. Practically none knew any Spanish. A few had saved a little capital, but most were penniless.

The beginnings were hard. Those who had trades, such as mechanics, carpenters, painters, and engineers, made quick starts and rapid progress; but those who had not were forced to take what work they could get, even as waiters and servants. The Joint helped with loans and gifts, working with the new Bolivian organization SOPRO (Sociedad de Protección de los Inmigrantes Israelitas); and that unpredictable figure Mauricio Hochschild, the great tin magnate, for a long while contributed a thousand dollars a month to the support of his immigrant fellow Jews. The slow uphill climb began.

This time there was no question of their dissolving into the surrounding culture. They clung together, and by autumn both La Paz, the capital, and Cochabamba, Bolivia's second city, had founded *Gemeinden,* or organized Jewish communities. Cochabamba had the advantage of the presence of Rabbi Fritz Winter, who held services for three hundred people and taught forty children at school. Spanish courses, with one hundred and fifty enrolled, helped to naturalize many to their new surroundings.

Once settled, they began setting up other community organizations. First was the Macabi Sports Club, which by the feats of its members immediately disabused Bolivians of any notion that Jews were pale, rachitic people living indoors—indeed, this club continues to do a remarkable amount for the Jewish colony's prestige. By 1941, because of the top-heavy proportion of elderly people without younger relatives, a home for old people was established at Cochabamba, with room for forty people. At first it was financed by the Joint, but by 1945 the local SOPRO was able to take over.

Organizations like the Chevra Kadisha, Bikur Cholim, and the Sterbekasse (Burial Society) brought aid in religious matters, illness, and death. In Cochabamba such organizations were independent; in La Paz they were parts of the old-established Círculo Israelita. Indeed, certain rivalries have sprung up among Bolivian Jewry, first of which is

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that between the Jews of La Paz and Cochabamba. The latter city boasts of having had, since 1947, a well-functioning Spar- und Hilfskasse (Savings and Aid Society) that both provides a safe investment for modest savings and helps newcomers to get a start. But La Paz can boast that, whereas Cochabamba has as yet only a Jewish kindergarten, La Paz has the Escuela Israelita Boliviana (Bolivian Israelite School), which already includes all primary grades and is beginning to set up the secondary ones, too. This school offers a general education in Spanish, plus religious instruction and courses in Hebrew; and so high is its reputation that it has more Gentile than Jewish Bolivians on its rolls.

A Liga de Damas (Ladies' Aid) cares for the sick and discreetly helps families too modest to apply publicly for aid. The B'nai B'rith has a chapter. The Women's International Zionist Organization is active. The Federación Sionista Unida Boliviana coordinates aid for Israel. And other associations and clubs abound.

Rabbi Winter was soon called to a more important post in Uruguay, and since then Bolivia has been without a rabbi. The reason seems to be that the graduates of American rabbinical seminaries, unaware of the extremely low cost of living in Bolivia, have consistently refused to accept appointments there because of doubt as to their ability to live on a salary which, expressed in dollars, looks small indeed, though it is ample for the country. At first religious services in both cities had to wander from one rented room to another. But in September 1945 in Cochabamba the Reform community started planning a synagogue. The cornerstone was laid in March 1946, and it was dedicated in June 1947. This handsome modern building, into whose walls is built in sorrowing memorial a stone from the principal Vienna synagogue destroyed by Nazi barbarism, has the odd distinction of being, at 8,432 feet, the highest synagogue in the world. In La Paz, the *Gemeinde*—whose members are German Jews and Reform—has just bought a house for conversion into a synagogue. The East European Jews, mostly Orthodox, have a rented room in Cochabamba; in La Paz, they use the assembly hall in the Círculo Israelita's big modern building, which houses most of that city's Jewish organizations.

Unfortunately, both in La Paz and Cochabamba, East and Central European Jews are divided in two. The former, largely Polish and Rumanian, are grouped in the Círculo Israelita; the latter, largely German, Czech, and Austrian, in the Comunidad Israelita. Numerous efforts at bringing them together have been made, but in vain. More progress has been realized perhaps in La Paz, where a Comité Central Judío, consisting of the presidents of the Comunidad, the Círculo, and the Zionist Federation, coordinates the affairs of the otherwise divided Jewish community. It is hoped eventually to extend this coordinating authority to all Bolivia. And certainly, if troubles threaten Bolivian Jewry, it were better to hang together in at least a country-wide union.

IF ONLY La Paz and Cochabamba have been mentioned so far, it is because the overwhelming majority of Bolivia's Jews are concentrated there. Of the estimated 4,300 Jews now remaining, 3,000 are in the high, cold capital, La Paz (elevation: 12,220 feet); and 800 in flowery, easygoing Cochabamba. The dusty mining center of Oruro has but 120 Jews; the drowsing ex-capital, Sucre, and silver-famed Potosí, have 60 each; tropical lowland Santa Cruz has 50.

Because many Jews had entered with agricultural visas, several efforts were made to set up large-scale agricultural colonies. One, in the jungles of Chaparé, lasted from 1940 through 1941. But the region was unhealthy, and several colonists died; however, it was the lack of roads to suitable markets that finally defeated the venture. Hochschild between 1941 and 1945 spent some five million *bolivianos* (at the exchange then, close to $100,000) on a big agricultural development for the immigrants at Coroico, but again the lack of roads to an adequate market brought failure in the end. These ventures, though unsuccessful, give the lie to a

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chronic anti-Semitic accusation that Jewish refugees, admitted as farmers, never turned a single furrow, but rushed instantly one and all into commerce. There remain, in any case, about five big Jewish farms, mainly dairies, around La Paz, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz.

The majority of the Jewish newcomers went into manufacturing and trade. The manufacturing was naturally on an artisan scale—small shops tanning leather, manufacturing bed-frames, furniture, and shoes, and shirts and knitwear and knitting wools and clothes in general. Numerous small retail shops were opened, and grew. And many went into "import-export." Abuses in every country have rendered "import-export" almost a dirty word, redolent of customs fraud, cooked-up manifests, black-market foreign exchange, etc. Yet the vast majority of Jewish importing houses in Bolivia enjoy an impeccable reputation.

HALF of the Jews who came to Bolivia between 1935 and 1939, ambitious for broader horizons, gradually migrated to the United States, as their finances and the immigration quotas permitted. The rest adapted themselves contentedly to a culture which, if backward and strange, at least afforded opportunity for material success and a civilized life.

Bolivia, when they arrived, betrayed no signs whatever of the presence of anti-Semitism. There were a few Nazified Germans, naturalized and otherwise, who spread their poison diligently and had some effect eventually, but never on the government. Relations with the authorities were excellent: indeed, when Jews with German passports were innocently caught in the arrests of German and Japanese nationals that were one of the conditions imposed by the American government for its recognition of the Villaroel government in 1944, the Jewish community was granted a power usually limited to sovereign states: German Jews were released provided that the officials of the Jewish community issued them a sort of internal passport certifying their identity as Jews.

The war in Palestine brought a brief flurry of trouble. Young Arabs went round at night scrawling anti-Semitic slogans on walls and breaking the glass signs of Jewish merchants. But a night patrol organized by the young athletes of the Macabi put a quick stop to this.

But if there were very few overt acts, an undercurrent of anti-Semitism that had begun soon after the refugees' arrival was spreading dangerously through the Bolivian population, stimulated, after the close of the war, by a new wave of arrivals from Germany—this time Nazis and "ex"-Nazis. By 1951 anti-Semitism was beginning to break through to the surface. Last winter the first anonymous leaflet appeared in La Paz; it showed the hook-beaked caricature of a Jew lugging a black suitcase, and the slogan, "Kill the Jew!" The La Paz German Club introduced an "Aryan" provision into its by-laws. In early April of this year leaflets again appeared in La Paz, purporting to be issued by a "Comité de Defensa del Pueblo Boliviano," which blamed Jews for all the misery, shortages, and hoarding from which Bolivia is currently suffering, and, what was graver still, recommended as a solution the mass plundering of Jewish stores. In Cochabamba, the ASINCONAL (Associación Industrial y Comercial Nacional), a faction within the official Chamber of Commerce, launched a strong campaign to have the government bar Jews from commercial activity.

Then, to top it all, the April revolution brought to power in Bolivia the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (Nationalist Revolutionary Movement), generally called the MNR. This party's written program contains two anti-Semitic declarations of principle; but, more disturbingly, it has long had a general reputation as being anti-Semitic, and many of its members have been extremely vocal on the subject. It is not surprising that a tremor ran through Bolivia's Jewish colonies.

Unquestionably the MNR now holds the key to the situation in Bolivia. But before analyzing the degree to which overt anti-Semitic acts can be expected of it, it would

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be useful to examine the origins, particularities, and principal charges made by Bolivian anti-Semitism.

Its first characteristic is that, in its origins as in many of its manifestations, it is less anti-Semitism as such than a specific case of a general xenophobia. The "mass" immigration of Jews reached Bolivia just at a time when she was beginning to feel the most disastrous of the inflationary after-effects of her war with Paraguay over the Gran Chaco. The *boliviano* had dropped in real value from two and a half to the dollar to four at the beginning of 1939, and thirty-five at the end of the same year. Wages and indeed all incomes had not yet made the adjustment to inflation that they later did. Meanwhile prices skyrocketed to such a height that every shopkeeper seemed a fiend incarnate. The rapid spread of Jews through Bolivia's retail trade at just this moment made them immediate targets for popular resentment. The same factors—refugee Jewish storekeepers occupying the most exposed positions as targets of the resentment against inflation—have brought about a growth of anti-Semitism in other Latin American countries, especially Venezuela, Ecuador, and Costa Rica. This would have occurred had the retailers been Spanish instead of Jewish. A similar situation brought similar feeling against the Chinese in Burma. Comic confirmation of the xenophobic nature of Bolivian anti-Semitism was brought at the end of April by the airing of a scandal in the Cochabamba schools, where black-haired and dark-skinned children, sometimes with the indifference or approval of their teachers, had been jeering at and beating up as "Jews" all children who were blond—a situation that must have caused added aggravation to the Nazi German fathers of some of the victims.

Far from comic, however, is the basic fact that anti-Semitism in Bolivia is not confined to psychotics and hysterics, or to a few middle-class groups who feel worsted in business competition, but is firmly rooted throughout the poorer classes, except, possibly, the industrial workers. This situation is as grave as it is unique. Scratch any shop-clerk, taxi-driver, gardener, maid, government clerk, market-woman, llama-drover, or petty artisan, and you will find an unreasoning and imbecile venom against Jews. Grimly typical was the incident during President Víctor Paz Estenssoro's speech to twenty thousand supporters welcoming him back from exile. When he stated that the new government would take the severest measures against tradesmen who hoarded goods and unjustifiably raised prices, a roar went up: "The Jews!" Be it said to the credit of Paz Estenssoro (who incidentally was the lawyer for the Jewish SOPRO in 1939) that he answered, "Jews or non-Jews! Anybody!" But the mob felt otherwise. Though the present danger may pass because no irresponsible leaders are trying to whip up overt anti-Semitic acts, the fact must never be overlooked that there lies waiting this mass reservoir of latent anti-Semitism. And it is the fundamental fact of the present Bolivian crisis.

The specifically Bolivian charges of the anti-Semites can be summed up under four heads: non-fulfilment of agricultural visas; monopoly of trade; speculation and foreign-exchange juggling; professionalization of bribery.

Oddly enough, it is the masses and not the professional anti-Semites who press the first charge. The latter admit frankly that penniless immigrants have the right to expect temporary housing, tools, seeds, and crop loans, and if all the government can do is wave at a patch of unreclaimed jungle, they can well be excused for returning to the cities. But the populace is not equally fair, and it keeps on mindlessly parroting this nonsense.

The second charge, monopoly of commerce, is without any real foundation. No bank, or industry over artisan size, is Jewish-owned. The largest firm with a Jewish interest is the middle-sized national silk works, FANASE (Fábrica Nacional de Sedas), which was founded by a Jew and a Japanese. The clothing trade is, as in many places, pretty well dominated by Jewish firms; but

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again, they are on the artisan scale, there is no monopoly, and anybody may compete with them. In textile manufacturing, as a matter of fact, the country's only really big combine, a semi-monopoly, is Arab-owned. For the rest, there has been of course a proliferation of little Jewish shops and import firms, but they have no more of a monopoly than the Yugoslavs or any other group—that is, none at all.

Paradoxically, the fact that Mauricio Hochschild was long the animator, and remains the principal stockholder, of one of the three enormous tin-mining combines, has not provoked anti-Semitic accusations under this head. Hochschild is hated, not as a Jew, but as a tin magnate. As such he is just one of the trio, Patiño-Hochschild-Aramayo, which is pronounced as one word in Bolivia, and it is, among the populace, a spitting word.

To weigh the third charge, it is necessary to know two facts: Bolivia has suffered for well over a decade from a steady and incurable inflation; its imports—and it imports almost everything, including the bulk of its food—are made on a government-license basis at artificial low rates: sixty *bolivianos* per dollar for necessities, one hundred for semi-necessities, as against an open-market rate of two hundred and twenty at the time of writing. Stocking against certain price rises, and wangling for government-licensed *divisas* (foreign exchange) at the official rates, are here normal and universal business practice. It may be a bad system, open to abuses, but there is no evidence whatever that Jewish businessmen abuse the situation more than any other group.

On this last point, there is some evidence. Bolivia has always been a poor country, with functionaries so wretchedly paid that their corruptibility has been for decades taken as a matter of course. Without a little "gratification," many matters which should take half an hour have a way of taking weeks. The anti-Semites admit this, but say bribery was mild and spotty before the 1938-39 immigration, whereas now the rates have spurted way up and the system has been extended to every branch of government and of private business. One anti-Semite phrased it, "We were just amateurs at bribery; the Jews have made it professional." The anti-Semites are not fazed in the slightest by the observation that it takes two to consummate bribery, a recipient as well as an offerer. Those businessmen who privately admit the practice say in self-justification that unless they bribed it would be impossible to maintain the kind of business rhythm normal to normal countries, and that without bribery business activity would relapse into a lethargic drift-and-drowse rhythm that might satisfy Bolivians but would drive any other kind of businessman mad in a few months.

That there are occasional abuses is probable; indeed, no ethnic, religious, or any other kind of group has ever existed without some dishonest members. The leaders of Bolivian Jewry clearly recognize the danger that the few of its members who are guilty of sharp practices represent for their honest fellow Jews. Exposed, and their crooked behavior trumpeted as typical Jewish practice by unscrupulous anti-Semitic agitators, they could bring the gravest discredit and danger to the entire Jewish community. But the latter's leaders have no power of discipline here. Their only weapons are public opinion and ostracism—which is insufficient when applied to people whose trouble is precisely that they are *not* moral. Jewish leaders in Bolivia are acutely aware of the problem, but as yet have found no solution.

IN THIS whole general situation, then, the first Jewish reaction to the MNR's successful revolution was nervousness and fear. Both were fully justified by the party's program and even more by its reputation, and both were deepened by awareness of the presence of an inflammable reservoir of popular anti-Semitism. But as the days and then weeks passed without anything happening, the vast majority of Bolivia's Jews swung round from pessimism to extreme optimism, telling themselves that things would now be better than ever. At the end of six weeks MNR chiefs met with Jewish leaders, and

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assurances were given that there was no anti-Semitism in the MNR and that the Jewish colony might relax in the knowledge that absolutely no discriminatory measures against them were envisaged by the new government. To demonstrate their sincerity, the MNR leaders fired a bank clerk who had celebrated the revolution by being outrageously rude to a Jewish client. With the news of this meeting, Jewish optimism became total and almost universal.

In the opinion of a few of the most thoughtful members of the Jewish community, and of the present writer, both the original fright and the present confidence are exaggerated and unjustified. The April revolution was not the culmination but the beginning of serious political developments in Bolivia and the real anti-Semitic danger lies not in the past, but in the future. To understand why, it is necessary to learn a little about that complex and curious phenomenon, the MNR.

THE Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionaria is Bolivia's popular mass party. It controls today at least half of the some 185,000 Bolivians who are theoretically permitted to vote, as well as the overwhelming majority of the approximately 2,800,000 others disenfranchised by Bolivia's disgraceful election laws. As such, it is an *omnium gatherum* of people of every sort of political opinion, from downright fascists in its extreme right wing to Communist sympathizers in its extreme left. Its program is similarly a hodgepodge which reflects the disparity of its component elements. What holds it together is its anti-imperialist nationalism, its hatred of the *"rosca"*—the ring of big tin-mining corporations that has for decades constituted a state within the state, and is more powerful than the formal state itself—and its promises to improve the lot of the Bolivian industrial and semi-serf agricultural workers, whose misery must be seen to be believed.

The MNR has the support of both sectors of Bolivian Communism. As elsewhere in the world, the Stalinist Communists—here represented by two separate parties, a right-wing front, the Partido de la Izquierda Revolucionaria, and a newly-formed official and more openly radical party, the Partido Comunista—will make alliances with or offer unconditional support to any kind of regime, progressive or reactionary, provided it is at all anti-American. The MNR, with its slogans of anti-imperialism and nationalization of foreign enterprises, seems to them to fill this prescription. A rebuff they received in a recent MNR manifesto has nowise cooled the ardor of their wooing. The Trotskyist Communists, who in Bolivia far surpass the Stalinist Communists in numbers and influence, have a more complex and principled position. They support, not so much the MNR and its government as such, but what they consider progressive in its program. Simultaneously, they tell the Bolivian workers and peasant that the MNR does not really mean to carry out this program, and they hope, if these predictions are fulfilled, to win over the MNR mass base on the rebound of their disappointment.

While out of power the heterogeneity of a party like the MNR is relatively unimportant. Its program, untried in practice, can remain vague, and it can permit itself the most demagogic promises. But once it takes state power, its program must be made concrete and applied, and its promises kept or dishonored. There begins inevitably a process of political clarification and polarization; fundamental differences are revealed, and wings and factions created. It took less than a month for this process to reach such a point that right-wing Vice-President Sile Zuazo could, in an interview he gave to the New York *Times*, refer to the ideas of left-wing Minister of Mines and Petroleum Juan Lechín Orquendo as "foolish and fatuous."

One example should suffice to show what is at work. All tendencies in the MNR are for the nationalization of the three big mining combines, Patiño, Aramayo, and Hochschild. But to the right and left wings "nationalization" means two completely different things. To the left—and to the MNR's mass base, especially the mineworkers—it means immediate expropriation without com-

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pensation, and government operation under close control by the mineworkers themselves. The majority in the cabinet—which, besides a bankrupt treasury, is faced with a two-front political war against plots by the ousted right, and against pressure from its own left—leans to the right and is determined to defend private property and fight all socializing tendencies. Thus the nationalization program so far has meant only the setting up of a four-months' research commission that is also negotiating with the mining companies on compensation. It will probably end in a compromise whereby the companies remain in administration while the government controls the use of the foreign exchange earned.

In theory both plans can be called "nationalization," but in practice they are soon going to bring the MNR's right-wing leadership and its left-wing mass base into violent conflict. The situation is similar in the agricultural field. The right wing envisages the mildest and most gradual sort of agrarian reform; while the semi-serf Indians expect an immediate and total agrarian revolution, supported if necessary by bloody *jacqueries*.

In sum, the MNR has made demagogic promises to the Bolivians that it will be, predictably, unable to fulfill in anything like the form expected. Disappointment and impatience are already visible and audible, and are increasing very rapidly. At some point in the next year, and rather sooner than later, these are going to reach a pitch where the stability of the new regime will be imperiled.

AT THIS point, and not elsewhere, lies the real danger of anti-Semitism in Bolivia. Postulate a situation wherein the MNR's right wing is faced with mass discontent (and in volcanic Bolivia, especially today with over ten thousand rifles seized from the armories in the April revolution still in civilian hands, mass discontent is no academic matter); shortages continue; prices, far from being rolled back, continue to rise; the MNR's promises to raise living standards still remain unfulfilled. The people are angry. In such a situation the temptation will be great to try to divert popular indignation by propagating charges that it is the Jewish shopkeepers who hoard, the Jewish manufacturers who drive up prices, and the Jewish importers who commit frauds with the scarce foreign exchange. The reservoir of popular anti-Semitism renders it likely that such rumors would be all too readily believed. The situation is not new: elsewhere the Jew has been made the scapegoat for bad economic conditions due to quite other factors. But in Bolivia an outbreak of anti-Semitism could have a nationally characteristic suddenness and violence.

Such an outbreak would find Bolivia's Jews rather ill-prepared. Only about a quarter have become Bolivian citizens as yet. Visas for neighboring countries are difficult and take a long time to obtain. The minority that preferred Israel has mostly gone there already. A few highly vocal members of the community are already speaking of Bolivia as a possible trap, and urging that Jewish organizations in the United States consider measures, first for the protection and then the removal of Jews from Bolivia.

In the view of the present writer, such perspectives are exaggerated. Coldly weighed, the chances are good for avoiding anti-Semitic acts, legal or illegal. But the first step in combating the danger is to recognize it and state its existence. Euphoric confidence or ostrich pretense are poor defenses. It is necessary, at the same time, to stand up to anti-Semitism firmly and boldly. It is fatal to buy up a whole edition of anti-Semitic leaflets, or give furniture gratis to a blackmailing functionary of the new regime, or in any other way yield to demands tantamount to blackmail or ransom. Such tactics are a confession of weakness, a retreat before the main attack is even made, and the best way in the world to whet the appetite of unprincipled adventurers.

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IS PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION A FAILURE?

Some of the Current Criticisms Examined

J. GLENN GRAY

FACED with such publications as "How Red Is the Little Red Schoolhouse?" "Red-ucators at Harvard University," or, on a somewhat higher level, *God and Man at Yale,* modern educators can hardly be blamed for feeling that they must close ranks. Virtue must rise to confront vice, modernist Light must take its stand against old-fashioned Darkness. In such a struggle, it is easy to know which side one is on.

But the vociferous crackpots of the moment are not the only ones who have criticized American education during the past twenty years. Within the camp of "progressivism" itself there has been a steady undercurrent of self-criticism; nor have all critical "outsiders" been dangerous obscurantists. It goes without saying that demagogues like Allen Zoll, Lucille Crain, and Merwin K. Hart ought to be excluded from any serious discussion of education. But that doesn't mean there is nothing to discuss, or that the discussion has to be postponed because of unfavorable cultural climate. Considering how much honest criticism of present assumptions and practices in American education continues to come from teachers, parents, and alumni of modern schools who have a sincere interest in education's future, the possibility remains that something fundamental *is* wrong.

TAKING at face value the war cries of the embattled hosts in the current struggle over the public schools, one might almost think oneself in the presence of a duel to the death between fascism and Communism. Here a thoughtful educator, J. GLENN GRAY, suggests that behind the uncompromising and often demagogic attacks on modern American education, and the equally uncompromising and sometimes overzealous replies of its defenders, there exists a current of serious, responsible concern over the question of whether our schools, under the progressive dispensation, are offering a kind of education adequate to the times in which we live and the civilized future we hope for. Mr. Gray, associate professor of philosophy at Colorado College, tries to go to the roots of some of the prevailing criticisms of modern education, assessing both failings and virtues. Mr. Gray has written articles for *The American Scholar,* the *Journal of Philosophy,* and other periodicals, and has made one previous contribution to COMMENTARY: "Munich University: Class of '50" (May 1948); he is also the author of a book, *Hegel's Hellenic Ideal,* published in 1941. Mr. Gray was born in Pennsylvania in 1913 and attended Juniata College, the University of Pittsburgh, and Columbia University.

WHAT is known somewhat loosely as progressivism, or modernism, in American education was conceived and largely developed during the first three decades of this century. The set of ideas invoked is associated with the peculiarly American philosophy of pragmatism and the name of the late John Dewey. Dewey's actual meaning is often different from what such educational pragmatists as W. H. Kilpatrick and Harold Rugg *think* he means, but his thought has nevertheless been the chief stimulus to the revolt against European intellectualism in the curriculum, authoritarianism in classroom practice, and the emphasis on an intellectual elite in the student body.

Underlying Dewey's views on education was the conviction that America was different. In previous generations we had come to know our distinctive social and political destiny; now we were at last learning that we had a distinctive cultural destiny too. This meant that we had to get rid of a great deal of the past. We could dispense with some of the dubious wisdom of both the Hebrew-

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Christian tradition, with its authoritarianism and other-worldliness, and the Greco-Roman tradition, with its predilection for the contemplative life and for the eternal and unchanging. America promised better things, and had a new fate in store. "Our Times constitute a New Day in history; their conditions and problems are new, unlike in many respects those faced by the great masters of antiquity." So wrote Harold Rugg in *Foundations for American Education* (1947). Or, again, William Heard Kilpatrick in *The Educational Frontier* (1933), a collective book to which most of the leading educational theorists, including John Dewey, contributed: "Until the present hour the majority of men have been tied to superstition and other hindering authoritarianisms, on the basis of which real study has been counted either futile or wrong. Now we begin to be free."

We benefited not only by a fresh start without Europe's inherited woes and the heavy hand of tradition; we had also, in modern science, an entirely new instrument. With its wonderful child, technology, modern science was transforming everything. Social change, previously measured in centuries, could now be measured in years. If disorder and irrationality persisted in society, that was only "cultural lag," the failure of institutions to adapt themselves quickly enough. What was needed was more education. The scientific method of empirical observation, hypothesis, and experiment, when transferred from natural science to the problems of men, would progressively establish the good society. Educational practice, as Dewey put it in one of his books, might fairly be called "a kind of social engineering."

Though Dewey had relatively few illusions about the difficulties of realizing the new society, he was optimistic in those earlier years of the 20th century about the long-range outlook, viewing with great satisfaction the steady growth in prestige of the natural and social sciences and the decline of faith in other-worldly religions. His followers, considerably less realistic than he, were ready even at the first and least glow of light to proclaim the new day already dawned.

THE last two decades—alas!—have not brought that dawn, far from it. Conditions at mid-century have served to dash our over-hopeful optimism as to America's cultural revolution. The intellectual climate has changed radically and appears likely to change much more; on all sides, both abroad and here, current American values are under strong attack.

The Communist assault on all things American can be, and is, disregarded. More telling is the persistent criticism from British, French, and other democratic friends, who find us materialistic, culturally adolescent, superficial, even soulless. Here at home this criticism is echoed, for instance, in *Time,* which accuses our youth of being short on ideas, without individuality, security-obsessed, passive, conventional. In the *New York Times Magazine* and elsewhere, Bernard Iddings Bell has been castigating the schools, and the educational theories on which they allegedly operate, for turning out young Americans who "for the most part are incompetent to think and act intelligently, honestly, and bravely in this difficult era." David Riesman in *The Lonely Crowd* presents the unflattering thesis that American character is being increasingly formed by the mass media, by the need to conform, by external, transient standards of value.

Specific criticism of Dewey's pragmatic educational ideal goes as far back as the 1930's and has been gaining momentum ever since. To oversimplify somewhat, that criticism may be said to emanate from two main quarters: (1) the spokesmen of traditional culture, the so-called "Chicago school," and (2) the leaders of neo-orthodoxy in religion.

The former group, scornfully called by some pragmatists "the liberal arts scholastics," includes such men as Robert Hutchins, Mortimer Adler, Richard McKeon, Stringfellow Barr, and perhaps Mark Van Doren. Their position is best summarized perhaps by Hutchins in his *Education for Freedom*

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(1943), where he attacks the "cults" of skepticism, "presentism," "scientism," and anti-intellectualism, and emphasizes the need for quality and intellectual distinction to counteract educational mediocrity and the vulgarization of American culture. These educators stress the importance of tradition and the continuing relevance of the great books of the Western past, as well as the need to rediscover religious and metaphysical first principles. Though frequently denounced as socially conservative, even reactionary, their preference for quality as against equality in education is supplemented by a strong concern for political and legal equality and a vigorous defense of civil rights. How deep and lasting the influence of this group will be on the educational life of our century is very difficult to estimate at present. Certainly the graduates of Chicago and St. Johns College at Annapolis are providing some leaven, to say nothing of the numerous "Great Books Seminars" and the persuasive writings and lectures of the leading spirits of the school.

The religious critics of progressive education, on the other hand, make a radical attack on the modernists' faith in man. This reaction has come most dramatically from among Protestants, rather than Catholics, though they too are, naturally, in opposition. The renaissance of "neo-orthodox" Christianity, led by Reinhold Niebuhr and a handful of gifted younger theologians, has been one of the startling phenomena of the last decades. Like the Old Testament prophets, their favorite Biblical inspiration, they attack many of the popular credos of the age. Their critique has universal scope but its specific blows are aimed usually at pragmatism, Niebuhr in particular choosing John Dewey as his target. The neo-orthodox theologians stress the limitations of education in general, whether new or old, as a means of overcoming human shortcomings. They see unregenerate, selfish, egotistic human nature, educated and uneducated, scientific and superstitious, at the root of all social evil. This is what the neo-orthodox call sin, the omnipresence of which, even in the pretensions of a saint, convinces them that our society can be saved only by the rebirth of true religious faith coupled with the grace of God.

The pragmatist confidence in social engineering, technology, and the scientific method is found by these theologians to be but another symptom of overweening human pride, of a *hybris* that is already receiving its appropriate punishment. But this does not mean that the neo-orthodox leaders are indifferent to the question of concrete improvements in the social status quo. Like the "Chicago school," they cannot be accused of speaking for social or political reaction; Niebuhr and his followers are usually in the forefront of liberal movements, often acting side by side with pragmatist educators. While their view has behind it no mass movement on the order of the 19th-century religious revivals, it has penetrated deeply into the consciousness of many reflective people, and probably already forms one of the significant intellectual currents of the 20th century.

There has been, in any case, during the last decades, a widespread loss of faith in science as an instrument of social salvation. Just how widespread is a matter for speculation, but it is certainly evident enough in the college classroom. Even those of us teaching only a relatively short time can detect a change in young people's attitudes. Those students in a philosophy class who a few years ago would have held out vigorously for scientific positivism and progress are on the defensive now or altogether silent. Scientific achievements are still treated with seriousness; scientific pursuits are still vocationally lucrative and, as such, in demand. But the scientist as a culture hero is a rapidly fading image, and the full impact of the collapse of faith in science as mankind's savior is still to be experienced.

WHAT justice is there, all in all, in these attacks? I myself would suggest that the most unfortunate aspect of the pragmatist educational ideal, or of the manner in which it is presented, has been the slighting

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of much of the richest fruit of the Western heritage. One cannot read Kilpatrick, Rugg, or most of the others without detecting in them a certain impatience with ways of thought and action before about 1900. Kilpatrick somewhere lists John Dewey as the world's third greatest philosopher, with only Plato and Aristotle taking precedence; but Plato and Aristotle are also Kilpatrick's favorite whipping boys, and one wonders by what instinct of proper piety he is led to give first rank to these arch-intellectuals of ancient Greece.

Here one must note again that Dewey has clearly separated himself from the Deweyites. Though his polemic against the Western tradition has been continuous, it has been selective. Dewey obviously wants to preserve what is worth preserving of the old, and to incorporate it in American experience. Nevertheless, I remember well from my days as a graduate student at Columbia, some years ago, how my professors complained about certain students who adhered to Dewey's ideas having continually to be urged to read works of philosophy written before the 20th century.

This lack of regard for tradition has been unfortunate in many ways. It has certainly ministered to the already well-established strain of anti-intellectualism in our culture. Perhaps nothing about America puts off other peoples as much as this. Today, our neighbors seem to grieve in chorus—in muted tones, to be sure—about the absence of spirituality in American life, about our insensitivity to things of the mind, about our exaggerated respect for bathroom fixtures and up-to-date machines. Some veterans of the recent war find it still painful to recall the average American soldier's contempt for countries like Italy and France, a contempt primarily motivated by the absence of modern conveniences.

Men without a sense of tradition seem to lack certain dimensions of being, and perhaps this is the most damaging thing that can be said about the educational pragmatists. Often quite right in what they say and see, they are blind to so much more. In a century of expanding perspectives, theirs seem to have narrowed. They continue, for example, to take a rather hostile view of the study of foreign languages, ancient and modern, and have contributed a good deal to the decline of language study in America. Yet from a practical, if not from an aesthetic, viewpoint, never has knowledge of foreign languages been more needed by Americans than now.

The educational pragmatists argue that there is no immediate interest to "motivate" the learning of languages; since the student has little opportunity for personal experience in foreign countries or with foreigners, learning a foreign language is "artificial." Samuel Tenenbaum's recent biography of W. H. Kilpatrick contains a footnote eloquent of progressivist views in this respect: "The writer has seen a class of six hundred and more graduate students in education, comprising teachers, principals, superintendents, vote their opinion in overwhelming numbers that Greek, Latin, and mathematics offered the least likely possibilities for educational growth and with almost the same unanimity they placed dancing, dramatics, and doll-playing high on the list in this regard."

THE progressivists base their doctrines on experience, but this term is often used to exclude as much as it includes. The experience won from books and reflection is not so often meant as the experience of manipulating the tools of the immediate environment. A kind of romantic excess in their notion of experience in education is reminiscent of Rousseau's and Wordsworth's idealization of childhood. Shades of the prison-house close about the growing boy! —it is no far cry from this to the familiar American glorification of youth. In an article a few years back entitled "Children State Their Educational Philosophy," a supervising teacher in Denver reports the results of asking five- to twelve-year-olds to formulate their "educational philosophy." The answers were naturally varied, ranging from "teachers should be nice" to "I'd have

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more picture shows." The teacher concludes in triumph: "This 'philosophy' of the children comes close to the best in modern educational philosophy. The ideas are there. School should be 'a place for doing'—for 'learning what we live.'"

This is something more than a set of ideas—it is a cultural climate. A reading of such a book as *The New Leaven* (1928), by the founder of the Progressive Education Association, is at once exasperating, amusing, and inspiring. "The only order that is worthwhile," writes Stanwood Cobb about freedom in the progressive school, "is that which springs from the sense of order of the participants. *Let the compulsion come from within, not from without, is the slogan of the progressives*" (his italics). And he quotes with approval another progressivist on the subject of homework: "Would it not be well for us to give our pupils in this matter the possibility of choice and of self-direction? Shall I, moreover, by my action give the child to understand that he is incapable of making his own choices and plans and of directing himself? Shall I crush his self-respect and his ambition by showing that I consider his interests of little worth? Let me not rob him of his rightful leisure—as important a requisite for right living as food and sleep and brains. Let me not discourage his forming the habit of making his own disposal of his own time. I want his life at school and his life at home to be parts of a whole—a whole that is rich, interesting, purposeful, satisfying living, not a treadmill existence."

Finally we are told by Dr. Bamberger in the same book: "The primary function of a progressive school is not to teach arithmetic, nor languages, nor reading and the like but to have children learn to make, to do, to create, to produce, to study, and *to live together cooperatively and sympathetically*" (his italics). In this single sentence one can feel both the virtues and the vices of the movement.

EVIDENCE accumulates, in David Riesman's book, *The Lonely Crowd*, and elsewhere, that the progressivist attempt to rid traditional education of an unintelligent standardization and conformity is resulting in another sort of standardization, not less arid than the old. To free the child has in practice proved to be much more difficult than to write about his need for freedom. Newer methods directed to this specific end are sometimes less successful than older methods which boasted no such exalted goal. The same can probably be said for the progressivist aim of creating genuine individualists. Individuality is doubtless a strange and wonderful growth. But it may be that it can be fostered best in an atmosphere of revolt: young people need to feel themselves at odds with the attitudes of their elders and their society, and in their struggle against these they can attain an indispensable sense of direction and accomplishment. If this be true, it is easy to see why individualism is unlikely to result from the modernist methods. In their eagerness to fall in with the youngsters' will and desires, the progressivists have cut the roots of this healthy revolt. More important, by ceasing to stress intellectual achievement and distinction, they have taken away a prime motive for individuality.

To live together cooperatively and sympathetically! Who can deny in today's world the nobility of this aim? But the process of social adjustment and socialization of taste can hardly put one on the high road to free individuality. Nor can adjustment and socialization compensate for the sterner demands of mastering subject matter and the slowly acquired discipline necessary to achieve distinction in any sphere. It is not surprising that progressive schools are accused of creating, in someone's phrase, "thousands of individualists all exactly alike."

It is rash, no doubt, to speak of the type of person progressive education is turning out. But there is general agreement that high goals and adventurousness are not characteristic of them. There is not much swimming against the current; the desire to fit in and to belong are too strong. One is reminded of Riesman's phrase, used in a dif-

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ferent context: they know what they *like* but do not know what they *want*.

To blame the decline of individuality on progressivism would of course be going too far. Forces of anti-individualism are embedded in the cultural atmosphere of America. Nevertheless, the modernist educator is not without blame. He has too often conceived the personality of students as utterly plastic, for educational engineering to make of them what it will. Given time and the application of the newest methods, he has believed, all problems are solvable, everyone is "adjustable," all tastes can be socialized. Planning is all. Such a faith, implicit on nearly every page of *The New Leaven* and other progressivist writings, seems naive in underestimating the recalcitrance, the complexities and the unpredictable creativity of human nature. It is also dangerous. For it does not allow the deeper reaches of personality to evolve of themselves, in solitude and silence. The faith in total rationality, in "human engineering," leads to the manipulation of persons in total disregard for the element of sanctity essential to the full human being. Although the visions of George Orwell in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* seem a little fantastic, we may yet one day need to be saved from facile, transparent individuals for whom the world is nothing but surface.

OF COURSE, it is easiest to criticize the modernists when one overlooks certain basic problems of American education in the last fifty years, particularly on the primary and secondary level. It must not be forgotten that our attempt to give a free basic education to everyone, irrespective of talent, is something new under the sun, and in effect a gigantic cultural experiment still in progress. The insistent question arises: how can we communicate the wisdom of the past to vast numbers of students, many of whom lack any inclination for study of the heritage stored in books and in monuments of art? Has not much of what is called progressivism been the inevitable response to the demands made by a program of compulsory education for all? Our schools have been flooded with a mass of students who are simply not educable in intellectual disciplines. Teaching must start where they are, stay close to their immediate interests, and be content to guide them in the only directions open to them; the vast majority of students must be given something that is not primarily intellectual, or else given nothing at all. It is not even a question of watering down and simplifying traditional courses in mathematics, languages, and the sciences; they must be given something altogether different—something more practical than ideas, than history, than scientific formulas, and than the forms of English grammar. Seen in this light, much of progressivism is simply an *ex post facto* set of theories developed to meet the bitter facts of life. And, indeed, the books of pragmatist educators are full of convincing examples of how meaningless traditional learning really is for the average school child of today.

Europeans looking at our educational enterprise are likely to put the matter somewhat as follows, though perhaps not so bluntly: "You Americans are trying to educate too many. You ought first to recognize that large numbers in any population are uneducable, have always been, and will continue to be; moreover, even to educate all the educable is dangerous to any society, since only a small percentage of any population can find jobs requiring much intellectual training. We need, as the phrase has it, 'hewers of wood and drawers of water,' and we always shall. The great danger in education today is the creation of an academic proletariat, unemployed intellectuals who cannot find a place in society and hence will foment unrest. The ills of your American system, if you are realistic, are traceable to your attempt to do the impossible and the undesirable: to educate everyone in a single-track academic system."

Against this argument, cogent as it may seem—what teacher has not felt at times that he is trying to do the impossible and the undesirable?—I think most Americans will stand with the progressive educators in

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their commitment to universal education despite all its shortcomings. Admittedly, we do need more variety of educational opportunity to correspond with the variety of gifts and social needs. But to divide our young at an early age, as do many European systems, into those who are to receive an academic education and those who are to be manually trained and soon sent to work, goes against our grain. The notion of a fixed class of "hewers of wood and drawers of water" contradicts not only our Jacksonian heritage but, rightly understood, our Jeffersonian as well. Why should we assume that academic education will unfit us for the common work of the world, particularly when that work is increasingly done by machines and less and less of it requires back-breaking labor? Why, too, should education be so largely tied to vocational training at a time when all of us have increasing amounts of leisure at our disposal? To find appropriate jobs for the educated may well be the more urgent problem, but to fill creatively the leisure of the employed is probably a more crucial one in the long run.

It is certainly a great wrong not to recognize the unique value of the highly gifted individual and provide him with the best education possible. That wrong our society too frequently commits, with consequences that are doubtless more far-reaching than we know. From ancient times the complaint against equalitarian democracy has been that it favors the mediocre at the expense of the superior; and this conviction has helped call forth the protest of the "Chicago school," prompting them to their vigorous countermeasures.

But it is equally true that there is no neat dividing line between the gifted and the mediocre. Intellectual gifts are distributed along an unbroken line, and it is a question of more or less, not difference in kind. The student who seems to belong to the "elite" as a junior in high school may turn out to be ingloriously average by the time he is a senior in college. And the opposite is just as often true; people come into possession of their powers in the most unpredictable ways. Who knows how many creative intellects have been stunted by the European attempt to sort the sheep from the goats at an early age. The European practice may be justified by economic necessity; America lacks this justification.

IN ADDITION to defending universal public education, the educational pragmatists have also made an inestimable contribution by democratizing classroom procedure and fostering an informal relation between student and teacher. This feature of our educational system is invariably commented on favorably, even enthusiastically, by European students visiting America, and it seems to have been most fruitful in its consequences. The lecture system, so prevalent in America a generation ago, has been challenged successfully in many of our institutions of higher learning. And on the lower levels, the teacher-dominated classroom, rigid in procedure and content, is giving way to something more human and livable. What excesses may have been committed in this democratizing procedure should not blind us to how great a gain has been made over the classroom of a generation ago. Respect for the student's individuality and for the free development of his interests has done much to take away that intense dislike of school which most Americans past the age of thirty can remember only too well.

"There is, I think," writes John Dewey, "no point in the philosophy of progressive education which is sounder than its emphasis upon the importance of the participation of the learner in the formation of the purposes which direct his activities in the learning process, just as there is no defect in traditional education greater than its failure to secure the active cooperation of the pupil in construction of the purposes involved in his studying" (*Experience and Education*). That this participation and cooperation have sometimes been won at great cost, as critics of modernist schools and methods allege, does not refute Dewey's statement. Nor does the frequent charge

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that children "do not learn" in such schools and under such methods. Studies that have been made tend to show that the products of private progressive schools perform on the whole somewhat better in advanced education than do students from traditional schools.* And let us not be altogether "pragmatic" about this; quite apart from how much the children learn, is it not worth a great deal that their teachers are no longer encouraged to be tyrants?

THE problem at the center of our educational discontent at present, however, is not so much *how* to teach and *whom* to teach, as *what* to teach. Beneath all argument about method, it is the content of education that remains most bitterly disputed. And here I think the educational pragmatists are least satisfying, primarily because their assumptions as to the novelty of American experience and the magic power of science in solving social problems are becoming increasingly dubious.

Seen in the sobering light of the last decades, there is little evidence for the assumption that our American civilization constitutes something utterly new under the sun. Certainly it is a new chapter in the story of Western civilization and may turn out to be a very good and important chapter. But the lesson we are learning now is that the cataclysmic changes of recent decades have not really altered the nature of our essential problems. They remain with us and require the virtues familiar of old, and as difficult to practice now as then. For our society collectively, and for each of us individually, a willingness to learn from past history and a proper humility toward the experience of other peoples constitute, I think, the prerequisites of wisdom. It is folly to imagine that we can cut ourselves loose from tradition and go it alone in the 20th century.

But even when we have acquired a proper perspective and a more modest appraisal of our relation to history at large, the problem of what to teach is still only partly answered. How much of the Western heritage can really be communicated to myriads of school children so variously gifted and for the most part so resistant to acquiring the intellectual tools of knowledge? What parts of our heritage are truly worth teaching and how do we separate them from those parts which should be quietly forgotten? There is, too, the problem of criticizing, adapting, improving the desirable parts of that heritage—in Goethe's phrase, the problem of how to "earn it anew, in order really to possess it."

We need to look, in education, for those new ways of transmitting the tradition which alone can give us a sense of continuity with the past. And it seems quite clear that any society must largely perform this by emotive rather than purely intellectual means. Our preoccupation with science and our pride in American differentness have made us neglectful of the educational possibilities of art and religion, which are clearly the chief bearers of tradition. We are rediscovering the value of art in our educational system much more rapidly than we are rediscovering religion. Intimately wedded to art so frequently in the past, religion has increasingly become divorced from all other human concerns. In some sense, I think the crisis in education can be described in terms of confusion about the place of religion in the good life.

SURELY the religious quest is not like the scientific enterprise. Science seeks the

*My own experience with students from progressive schools is probably not typical but may be worth recording. At the beginning of a first course in philosophy, they are likely to be apologetic, sometimes confiding to me after class that "I went to one of those progressive schools and I'm not used to taking tests and learning subject matter." But the initial disadvantages under which they labor seem to be offset by a freer attitude toward learning and a greater willingness to air their difficulties in class and to their professor in private. At the end of the course one is hard put to discover any great difference between them and the other students. To be sure, in philosophy, unlike many other subjects, all start from scratch in college.

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truth about the natural and human world, whereas religion seeks to relate the individual meaningfully to the large issues of life and destiny. The primary question to ask of religion is not: is this or that religion true? but: how adequately does any religion conceive of God? What is its vision of man's ultimate relations and his comprehensive ideals? George Santayana, that unbeliever who understands the essence of religion better than most believers, sees the core of religion in the attitudes of piety and spirituality. Piety is man's "reverent attachment to the sources of his being and the steadying of his life by that attachment"; this is the retrospective aspect of religion, which attaches us in loyalty to parents, ancestors, country, and to humanity at large, indeed to the whole natural cosmos. The prospective side of religion, spirituality, Santayana defines as our capacity to live in view of ideals, to subordinate everything to the pursuit of what we consider to be the ultimate good.

Understood as the individual's attitude toward his total environment and final goals, the religious spirit is obviously as likely to be found in the layman as in the priest, the minister, or the rabbi. The American separation of church and state and the consequent prohibition of formal religious instruction in public schools has had an utterly unintended effect: it has led to the tacit conclusion that religion is not important. If it were—so goes the unconscious reasoning—why would we not try to communicate it to the youngsters in our schools? Yet nothing could have been further from the minds of our forefathers than the elimination of religion from American education; it is clear that they sought only to eliminate religious *sectarianism* from *political* life. In any case, the secularization of our culture, possibly inevitable in any case, has been unwittingly aided and abetted by our schools. The religious heritage, once taught in home and church or synagogue, is now a closed book to millions. Many thoughtful educators are realizing increasingly in our day that the situation is intolerable. John Nason, Swarthmore's president, recently put it forthrightly: "Since religion is a part of our heritage, and since for an increasing number of boys and girls it is not adequately taught outside the school, it must perforce be taught within the school."

Though our society is not going to reverse the secularizing process easily or quickly, we must surely one day learn that religion is not synonymous with sect or creed. For a generation to grow up without awareness of a religious heritage is dangerously to lose contact with the sources of its individual and collective being. For the religious spirit is not at variance with, but coordinate with, our scientific, artistic, intellectual drives—and probably more inclusive than they. Modern education has left this concern too often untapped or almost completely latent. Here the practical, manipulative intellect, so much stressed by the educational pragmatists, is most at a loss. And this educational failure at the deepest emotional level is no small thing.

But is not religious faith as a potent cultural force quite dead? I do not think so. At least not in the minds of our younger generation. Though my experience is greatly limited, I find general agreement, among writers on the subject, that few college students today call themselves atheists, and not so many more, agnostics. To be sure, the majority do not identify themselves with any creed. They are commendably wary of the tendency to wishful thinking in religion. And they seem exaggeratedly skeptical of people to whom religion is a way of earning a living. They say, in effect, as I try to gauge the classroom attitude: We are not unbelievers or even indifferent, but we are not taken in by the hokum that always seems to go with this business.

On the other hand, they are more than open to discussions on the subject with those whose religious faith has grown out of experience or from a generous acquaintance with our heritage. There seems to be a hunger for a religious commitment that is genuine and free from the unction that

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so often accompanies it. This is, of course, not unrelated to the confusion and despair of our times. But what religion has not arisen out of such periods of history? Is suffering not one of the recognized ways of finding lasting values?

At all events, there is little chance that this religious concern among young people will lead to the truculent, intolerant, and fundamentally unspiritual faith implicit in such a book as William Buckley's *God and Man at Yale*. Buckley's aggressive orthodoxy is as remote as anything could be from the quieter, questioning search of a younger generation that has been largely separated from formal religious tradition.*

*The above comments on student attitudes toward religion were written before I read Will Herberg's "The Religious Stirring on the Campus" in the March 1952 COMMENTARY. I am gratified to see that they correspond closely to his observations, which are drawn from a considerably wider experience than mine.

If it be true that the deeper meaning of the present ferment in education is a growing rediscovery of fundamental values that we had forgotten, and a still confused desire to reinstate them, thoughtful people can yet take scant comfort from the present outlook. The problems we face in education require calmness and sanity, if action is to be wise. But, in this time of troubles, everything is liable to be corrupted by the twin evils of fear and partisan interest, and our young people are too frequently led to pursue, not the goals they really desire, but those that seem to assure them security.

Still, I cannot help feeling that there is some gain for wisdom in the contemporary educational crisis. At least we Americans are rapidly losing our complacency in the face of criticism from without and within. It is barely possible that even our crackpot critics may play the role of Mephistopheles —he who always willed the bad, but achieved the good.

THE DANCER

DAVID IGNATOW

It wasn't to shake her body that she danced
nor to make eyes either, but to spell
in one motion cat, dog, pig and waterfall;
by a flip of the hip or wrist or twist
of the torso: goat, lamb, wind and lover.
She rolled upon the floor and bit her nails,
leaped up and grabbed the air; swung her head
low between her knees and walked that way,
her arms dropping between her outstretched legs:
an old man, an elephant and a stalking tiger;
and just plain being tired of it all.

Flat upon her back, she was the world
before Columbus' time, with here and there
a shape thrown outwards, her stomach breathing,
her breasts sloping down from the world's edge.
With morning at the window and a drink,
she stretches forward to touch toes:
the world coming together, for one more show.

DAVID IGNATOW's poems have appeared frequently in COMMENTARY and other periodicals.

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THE CHANCES OF A MAO-STALIN RIFT

Will China's Communists Take the Tito Road?

FRANZ BORKENAU

MUCH has been said and written during the past year about the possibility of a falling out between Moscow and Peking. In some English left-wing circles the expectation of a conflict between the two leading Communist regimes has become the keystone of a complete political theory, while, with certain American groups, the denial of any differences between Russian and Chinese Communism that could conceivably lead to conflict is an article of faith.

If one examines the matter more closely, at least one element in this debate can be cleared up at the outset. Those who believe in the possibility of a clash between Moscow and Peking are thinking primarily of national rivalries or conflicts of national interest of basically the same type as we find in the non-Communist world. Such an approach poses the question incorrectly: for today national rivalries, even outside the Communist sphere, no longer lead to international conflicts in the grand style: it is pure illusion, for example, to think that the great struggle between the United States and Russia has anything to do with a conflict of national interests in 19th-century terms, as did, for example, the struggle between England and Germany before the First World War. So those who deny the possibility of a break between Russia and China based on national interests are, it seems to me, right: Stalin and Mao, in their relations with the West, are inseparably bound together by a common political credo, and this common credo overrides whatever secondary conflicts may exist between them.

However, the fact that in the face of "capitalist imperialism" differences between the national interests of Russia and China can be relatively easily adjusted by their Communist rulers does not preclude the possibility of a serious break between Russia and China: it means rather that we must look for it elsewhere. An intelligent American writer, Benjamin Schwartz, has recently suggested where we must look. In *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao* (Harvard University Press), he advances the thesis that Chinese Communism differs fundamentally from Russian Communism in that it is based on the peasantry rather than the proletariat. This approach comes closer to the problem in that, for the source of possible tensions within world Communism, it focuses on differences in the character of the two Communist parties. Every political and social order has its special type of international relationships and conflicts. In the Middle Ages, the principal conflicts were concerned with status and rank in feudal society. In modern times, they have related to the power of national states and the struggle for natural resources. In the Communist world, the party is the

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PERHAPS nothing so divides the free nations today as their varying estimates of Chinese Communism. One section of public opinion believes the Chinese Communists are as totally dependent on Moscow as those of any Cominform affiliate; another sees the possibility of China's becoming a second Yugoslavia. Here FRANZ BORKENAU, one of the world's leading authorities on contemporary Communism, discusses some little known material on Mao Tse-tung's past and the history of the Chinese Communist party generally, which may serve to illuminate this riddle. Mr. Borkenau is the author of a history of the Communist International, and of many other books. His last article in COMMENTARY was "How Deal With Franco?" in the December 1951 issue. His present article has been translated from German by Maurice J. Goldbloom.

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center of all things, and conflicts relate to the means by which it is held together and to the nature and extent of the area within which it can compel men to accept the strict letter of its doctrine. From this it follows that a Chinese deviation from Russian Communism in respect to social basis and "ideology" would be bound to lead to a life and death struggle—so Schwartz suggests.

But in my opinion Schwartz makes the mistake of overestimating the importance of formal Marxist doctrine in understanding the actual composition of contemporary Communist parties. According to Marx, the party of socialism had to have a proletarian class character, and this is certainly not true of Chinese Communism. But is it any truer of Russian Communism, an organization of intellectual professional revolutionaries which transformed itself into a new ruling class? Is it not rather true that in contemporary Communism – Russian, Chinese, or any other sort—Marx's emphasis on the proletariat is only a historical reminiscence, which Stalin himself, it now seems, is abandoning? An organization of professional revolutionaries, whether as a fighting party or a governing apparatus, by its very nature is independent of special interest groups. It is above them all – workers, peasants, businessmen or what-have-you – devoting itself to its vision, formulated quite apart from any interest group: it is just this that constitutes its "totalitarian" character.

Hence it hardly matters that Chinese Communism is alienated from the proletariat and based on the peasantry. If Chinese Communists were indeed nothing but an executive organ of peasant interests, and incapable of rising above the limits of peasant ideas, while the Russian Communist party held the same relation to the proletariat, then we would have an important basis for conflict between the two parties. But certainly this is not the case. Like every other Communist movement, Chinese Communism sought its mass base wherever it could be found, in this case among the peasants. But it never lost sight of the fact that this was a transitional stage, a problem of tactics, and that a Communist society had to be based on large-scale industry. It is today engaged in rapidly strengthening its base in the big cities, and in shifting its strength from the country. In any case, however, it is a matter of where its cadres are to be recruited, not a matter of which interest group is to be dominant. On this point, there is no basic and permanent difference between Chinese and Russian Communism.

NEVERTHELESS Schwartz is on the right path in his search for differences in the party structure of the two movements. And his analysis – which unfortunately only covers the period up to 1932—does point to one of the most important factors. This is that Mao has been quite independent of Moscow throughout his entire career. This is the point on which Mao's career resembles Tito's, as has often been pointed out; actually, Tito had a career first as a Comintern functionary in Spain and then as the Moscow-installed leader of the Yugoslav party. Mao on the other hand, although of course a loyal party member, was never particularly close to Moscow. Schwartz has dug up every detail on this point and has thus brought to light one of Moscow's most difficult problems. The world Communist movement depends on strict discipline from above; determination of all national leaders must be under the control of the highest center. Any party independent enough to select its own leader has generally been cast straightaway into the outer darkness. But such independence is just what happened in the largest and most important non-Russian Communist movement, and the leader's belated formal investiture by Moscow only underscores this fact. It is pregnant with the most serious consequences for world Communism, as we shall show.

BEFORE Mao became chairman of the Chinese Politburo, four other party leaderships had preceded him. Schwartz, like other writers on Chinese Communism, fails to recognize the essential character of these

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leaderships and of their rise and fall. The eyes of students of Chinese Communism are fixed too exclusively on China, and too little on Moscow. These four leaders of the early period were not the products of Chinese conditions. They were raised up and cast down by Moscow alone, in accordance with the tactical principles dominant there at a particular moment. The founder of the party, Chen Tu-hsiu, represented the "United Front" policy introduced by Karl Radek in 1921. In Europe, this meant cooperation between the Communists and the left wing of Social Democracy; in China, cooperation with the Kuomintang. This leadership fell at the end of 1927, but not because it had, at Stalin's orders, led the party into catastrophic defeats. No Communist party leadership has ever fallen as the result of a defeat, however severe, if its loyalties satisfied the men who were at the moment victorious in the Russian internal factional struggle. It fell because in the middle of 1927 Stalin began to prepare for his break with the right wing of the party, led by Bukharin and Rykov, and accordingly replaced "right" leadership with "left" leadership through the Comintern. This "turn" led to a sort of "transitional regime" in the Chinese Communist party. This was followed—again precisely paralleling similar shifts throughout the Communist world—by the installation of the left extremist Li Li-san as leader of the party. Little attention has been paid to the fact that all these left extremists who were put in the top positions in 1929—like Heinz Neumann in Germany, Barbé in France, and Guttmann in Czechoslovakia—were removed in 1931. Li Li-san suffered the same fate, and historians have given themselves unnecessary trouble in seeking for special "Chinese" reasons for his removal. In his place there appeared, as everywhere else, a group of leaders who were somewhat more moderate, but who were above all else directly under Moscow's thumb. Their principal representative was Wan Min.

Up to this point the history of the Chinese Communist party, notwithstanding all the dramatic crises of the Chinese Revolution, was a mechanical copy of the Moscow "general line." But at this point the chain suddenly breaks. The Wan Min Central Committee disintegrated under the pressure of persecution and its survivors fled into the interior, to the soviet district which had meanwhile been established in the mountains of Southern Kiangsi by Mao Tse-tung, Chu-teh, and their associates. And there Mao took over the leadership of the Chinese Communist party. The seats of the Central Committee and the Politburo were transferred from Shanghai to these isolated mountains; and the Comintern had no choice but to validate retroactively the removal of its representatives and the election of new leaders completely cut off from its control by geography. It all took place in the best tradition of Chinese courtesy, but it was a revolt against Moscow that went unpunished, and so was a historical turning point.

A whole array of factors obviously worked together to make all this possible. Most important, perhaps, was the growing indifference of Stalin and his circle to the Comintern, which characterized this phase and especially the period of the first Five Year Plan. (But this tendency was rapidly reversed after 1934.) Second perhaps was Stalin's wholesome dread of Chinese affairs; he had burnt his fingers there very badly in 1927-28, and what had happened since had in no way improved the situation of the Chinese Communists. A third factor was the proven incompetence of Wan Min. If as a result of all this the Chinese Communist party dissolved into nothingness—what did it matter? There is documentary proof that it took at least two years before Stalin even learned of the existence of Chinese soviets. No one, least of all Stalin, expected that Mao would ever again emerge from his mountain refuge.

STALIN's indifference suited Mao's diplomacy, which had a true Chinese deviousness as different as could be from the dogmatic obstinacy of European Communism. Mao's strength lay in the fact that

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he strictly abstained from the wild factional struggles which had unseated one leadership after another. Occasionally he strove to cushion the effects of these struggles in his native Hunan, which did not make him popular with the heads of the party. But when he took to the mountains in 1928, it was a step which was in full accord with the party line and gave rise to no suspicion of heresy. For "armed uprising" was the slogan of the hour. He held out while other leaders, more closely linked with the party leadership, threw their strength away in senseless offensives, and his rocky stronghold steadily increased in importance. The Shanghai party leadership betrayed no longing for the hunger and rarefied air of Tinkanshan, while he never failed in supplying the necessary declaration of fidelity.

So he was left in peace; and as leader of the last surviving splinter of the party, he finally came to head it. With this, he for the first time went beyond the bounds of loyal phrases and began to expand his own power. There can be no doubt that he was at that time already determined to be and to remain party leader. That he thought in terms of a conflict with Moscow is most improbable. Moscow heard as little from him as he heard from Moscow. The decision in favor of the "Long March" to the North was made by Mao himself and only formally ratified by Moscow.

In the North, in the Yenan district, his old opponents eagerly availed themselves of the opportunity for contacts with Moscow, and Mao had to entrust Wan Min and others with important party posts. But events were on Mao's side, for Moscow needed him urgently for the united front with Chiang Kai-shek against the Japanese: men like Wan Min or Li Li-san were incapable of carrying out such a maneuver. For Stalin, Mao Tse-tung was the instrument which could embroil the Japanese in China by forcing Chiang Kai-shek into an actively anti-Japanese policy. Thus Mao suddenly became a key piece on the Russian chessboard.

Now he sat firm in the saddle, no longer because his opponents were geographically unable to get at him, but because he had the strongest conceivable support. In 1937 his power within the party was at the zenith.

And then, there came the final *coup de théâtre*. When the outbreak of the Second World War reduced Russia's freedom of action, Mao Tse-tung threw Wan Min and all his "Muscovites" out of the party leadership. And in June 1941, a few weeks before the outbreak of the Russian war, he initiated the *cheng-feng*, or "rectification," campaign. What was to be "rectified"? The internal party regime, and that in a sense directly opposed to the point of view dominant in Moscow. It is this episode, scarcely known even today, which should be the point of reference of any investigation into the relationship between Moscow and Peking.

IT MUST be remembered that in Russia 1937-38 was the year of the great *chistka*, the terrible mass purge. It raged among the Chinese in Moscow as among the other foreigners there, but it did not affect the party organization in Yenan. Mao was left in peace because of his indispensability to Russian foreign policy, but he could not have the slightest shadow of a doubt that he also was marked for the proscription which had befallen the leaders of the Baltic, Polish, Hungarian, Yugoslav, and many other parties. He was a member of that Communist old guard which was at that time being liquidated everywhere (except in the French and English sectors of the world Communist movement, where it was similarly indispensable for reasons of foreign policy). But in addition, he had reached the top independently of the Russian party and police apparatus. Under such circumstances a European would probably have rebelled against Moscow and would have met disaster in the process. Mao showed his farsightedness when he substituted the *cheng-feng* for open rebellion.

The *cheng-feng* campaign dealt chiefly with the methods of internal party discus-

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sion. Chinese observers are agreed that the campaign was aimed directly at the Li Li-san and Wan Min groups—i.e., against Moscow's representatives in China—and their methods. The campaign sharply condemned the mixing of personal and political questions and threatened with the severest penalties those who could be shown to have denounced others from personal motives. It prohibited expulsion and police persecution because of purely tactical differences, and it ordered that internal party discussion be directed against "deviations" and not against the individuals who represented them. It may be objected that in the history of the world Communist movement there has not been any shortage of pious wishes and resolutions preaching peace. The proof of the good faith of this campaign is that in sharp contrast to the Russian Politburo and the Politburos of all the satellite states, the Chinese Politburo has never been purged. Even more decisive, the secret police have never played a role in the disputes within the Chinese leadership even distantly resembling that of the Russian secret police. In other words, the party of Mao Tse-tung, while it is indeed a totalitarian and therefore also terroristic party in relation to its social and political opponents and the general population, is no Stalinist party in the relationship of its leaders to the membership and to each other. This difference in internal party structure could only be eliminated if Mao's power were broken or the Russian party regime were completely transformed. Can two organizations of such different types cooperate peacefully indefinitely? We do not know.

WE HAVE shown how Mao's victory over the agents of Moscow within the party followed from his independent rise to power, and how it necessarily led to his determined, even if not explicit, rejection of the Stalinist type of party. And Mao continued to develop in the same direction. With the outbreak of the Second World War, Chinese Communism's only ties to Moscow, aside from the strength of the common Leninist tradition, were those of cooperation in foreign policy. These were indeed compelling bonds but they were loose ones.

This new situation is mirrored in a number of pronouncements on party doctrine which have gone completely unnoticed in other countries. World public opinion, its view still fixed on the bitter open debates of the 20's among the leaders of the Russian party, has misunderstood the "new style" which has characterized clashes within the world Communist movement since the beginning of the 30's. Today, there is no longer open polemic; but the slightest differences in wording thereby take on a significance which they could never acquire in a free and open discussion.

Mao Tse-tung had always been reserved in his praise of Stalin. But with the *cheng-feng*, Stalin's name was so completely relegated to the background in Chinese party literature that one may speak of an intentional disparagement of his significance. This situation begins to change a bit with the final conquest of China by the Communists, but a true turning point does not come until the conclusion of the Moscow agreement between China and the Soviet Union in the spring of 1950. From that time on, Stalin's name is to be found in all Chinese party documents. This appears to be a concession made by Mao in response to strong Russian complaints during the negotiations for the treaty.

But our thesis can be pointed up even more sharply. During the 30's in Russia the official doctrine was more and more insistently described as "Leninism-Stalinism." But after the *cheng-feng* Mao developed the rival formulation "Marxism-Leninism and the teachings of Chairman Mao." The absence of Stalin's name speaks louder than any words, and the modestly factual title "Chairman" pointedly contrasts with the growing deification of Stalin elsewhere; but most important, in the Chinese formula Mao now occupies the place held by Stalin in the Russian. This implies a claim to equality at a time when Mao's power did not extend beyond the Yenan district.

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But one need not rely on such inferences in order to demonstrate that a political reality of the first order is here involved. After the unification of China, and in particular during the great campaign centering around the thirtieth anniversary of the party's foundation, this claim is *expressly* raised. Now the formula is: Comrades Lenin and Stalin have shown the way for the modern industrial countries, for which the proletarian revolution is the road to Communism; but for the colonial and semi-colonial countries, who must reach Communism via a bloc of all anti-imperialist classes, the path is that of the Chinese Communist party under Chairman Mao. The Chinese Communist party thus advances its claim to the dominant role in the leadership of the Communist movements of three quarters of the inhabited world.

WE HAVE said that every social order has its own form of expansionism and consequently its own form of conflict. Here we can see the concrete meaning of this assertion. The conflict which indubitably exists between Stalin and Mao Tse-tung derives not from questions of territorial conquest or economic interest; when such matters come up today they are cleared out of the way as expeditiously as 18th- and 19th-century diplomacy cleared away questions relating to the "formal" rank of rulers, over which great wars had been fought in the feudal era. But in the Middle Ages the point of honor, and in the 19th century the national interest, could not be subject to genuine compromises, i.e., compromises willingly accepted and carried out. And thus it is in the totalitarian era with the right to ultimate control of party organizations. The struggles for power of the totalitarian era are struggles for party control. This was shown in the case of Tito, which as a result of lack of experience on both sides was a premature explosion of half-understood forces. The problem presented by Russo-Chinese relations is developing much more slowly, but will inevitably have more far-reaching historical results.

THE best barometer as to relations between Moscow and Peking is to be found in the varying influence of these two command centers on the Communist parties of Asia. Beyond doubt the division of Asia into spheres of influence was one of the principal objects of the Moscow negotiations of two years ago. It was then determined that Mao's most significant sphere of activity was to be India. This is clearly indicated by the otherwise incomprehensible zigzags in the policy of Indian Communism.

When the Chinese Communist troops reached the eastern border of Tibet, the Indian Communist party was under a left extremist leadership set up by Zhdanov, who had in the meantime been overthrown and died. This leadership, like that of Li Li-san's in China in 1930, was wedded to the mad idea of armed uprisings in the great Indian cities. It is odd that Moscow left this leadership at the helm so long, even after Zhdanov's overthrow, and when it was leading Indian Communism from catastrophe to catastrophe. Most likely this indulgence was connected with the bitter enmity of this group of leaders toward Mao, whom in violation of all party etiquette they openly denounced in the official party newspaper as an "opportunist." All this changed overnight after Mao's visit to Moscow. The Indians were forced to send polite telegrams to Peking, which Mao received with icy calm, and a few months later the ultra-left party leadership was removed. It was replaced with another group which, in accordance with Mao's example, shifted to a policy of peasant revolts. Thus in exchange for recognizing Stalin's renown, Mao received power over Indian Communism. He probably thought it a good exchange.

But things did not go quite as he wished. The uprising in Hyderabad could not be maintained. In the spring of 1951—apparently in some not quite clear way in connection with Russo-Chinese tensions in Korea—Moscow used this as the occasion for removing this new Indian leadership and replacing it with a third group, which sought its support in the trade unions of Bombay

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and paid much less respect to the Chinese example. But it was only a short interlude. In November Ajoy Ghosh was named secretary-general of the party. Not only were there new expressions of loyalty; party propaganda was now based exclusively on the Chinese model (the bloc of four classes, including the "national bourgeoisie") and on the renown of Mao. As a countermove Moscow had Ana Pauker of Rumania, writing in the Cominform's organ, attack the policy of a bloc with the national bourgeoisie as "opportunism." Thus the struggle for control of Indian Communism continues unabated. No wonder; Moscow and Peking alike are apparently convinced that India is the most important potential center of revolution. Whoever controls Indian Communism will automatically also dominate a Communist India. If this booty falls to Mao, then he is potentially far stronger than Moscow; if it falls to Stalin, then Chinese Communism will have only regional and limited significance.

All this may be seen so clearly in Indian developments because the Indian Communist party is to some extent an *enfant terrible* of the world Communist movement. Until recently it was possible in the party to engage in a form of open polemic such as has for decades been impossible in most Communist parties. The situation in the other Asian Communist parties is more obscure because there is less discussion of internal differences.

It is clear that for the time being Mao Tse-tung has taken no steps to build up his influence in Pakistan or further West. Rather he is endeavoring to strengthen his influence in Southeast Asia through the Communist parties of Burma and Malaya, both of which consist almost exclusively of Chinese. But one may not conclude from this that these two parties are simply branches of Peking; the guerilla war of the Malayan Communists is of a rather unpolitical type and shows no signs of being based on the Chinese experience. The situation in Indo-China is much clearer. Ho Chi Minh and his circle are loyal followers of Moscow, and share the opposition of Tonkinese and Annamese nationalists to any Chinese supremacy. It is worth bearing this fact in mind whenever the possibility of open and direct Chinese intervention in Vietnam is discussed. On the other hand, the situation in the Japanese and—perhaps even more significant—the Korean Communist parties is altogether obscure. Apparently Moscow has resisted Chinese penetration in this area more strongly than in India. Probably the many obscure party crises in Japan and the wishy-washiness of the political formulations used by the Japanese Communists result from an unresolved rivalry between the influences of Stalin and Mao.

These indications should lead us to watch systematically the developments which are taking place inside Asian Communism. Their importance has hitherto not been understood, and their study has in consequence been seriously neglected. But a warning is proper. We generally find in history that the most significant political conflicts, just because of the terrifying scope of their consequences, come only very slowly to the surface. Nothing would be more perilous than to let our recognition of this struggle over party type and party control lead us to expect a sensational eruption between Moscow and Peking in the near future. Only in the most severe sort of world political crisis, and even then only under very special conditions, could such conflicts lead to a sudden break between Moscow and Peking—even aside from the fact that all the talk of a supposed Chinese Titoism can only serve to bind Stalin and Mao even more strongly together. At the moment, the best attitude for the non-Communist world is to acquire an understanding of these tensions and to follow their development, without expecting any plums to fall into our laps. In any case, waiting has often been the most successful policy.

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GERMAN STUDENTS SEEK "PEACE WITH THE JEWS"

Behind the Fight Against Nazi Movie-Makers

HILDE WALTER

A SECOND flare-up of what has become known as the "Harlan Case" occurred in Germany this past January, when Veit Harlan's second postwar film, *Hanna Ammon*, had its first showings. Like his earlier film, *Immortal Beloved*, around which centered last year's efforts to keep Harlan out of public life (see COMMENTARY, March 1951), *Hanna Ammon* is completely unpolitical in content. But the name alone of Goebbels' former star director, maker of the infamous *Jew Suess*, aroused opposition, and on January 16, 1952, three hundred students of the University of Freiburg, in Baden in the south of Germany, demonstrated in protest at the showing of the movie in their city. The result was a bloody clash with the police in which a number of students suffered serious injuries. Nine days later, on January 25, much the same thing happened when *Hanna Ammon* was first shown in the North German university city of Goettingen, where policemen in plainclothes were joined by civilians in their attack on the demonstrating students.

Student life at most German universities was thereupon galvanized into new political activity as discussion of the Harlan case brought into question the whole attitude of the younger generation of German intellectuals towards their country's Nazi past, towards anti-Semitism and the whole problem of guilt and atonement. The Harlan case has become a watershed line at which the minds of Germans divide, offering a kind of premonition of how various individuals and groups might react towards a future revival of Nazism.

VEIT HARLAN resumed his film activity only after winning an acquittal in a long struggle with the denazification authorities. His first postwar movie appeared on German screens in 1950, and the first protest—a protest since then supported by thousands of other Germans—came immediately from Dr. Erich Lueth, press chief of the Hamburg municipality, who declared that the denazification tribunals had acquitted Harlan on purely formal legal grounds, while condemning him morally. "All decent Germans," Dr. Lueth proclaimed, "mindful of the tears that still flow at millions of Jewish graves," should protest against the distribution of Harlan films and boycott them. Dr. Lueth was thereupon sued by Harlan, the film company, and its distributor, and the courts decided against Lueth, forbidding him to call publicly for a boycott.

But this decision could not prevent a real anti-Harlan movement from getting under way. Those who led it could still, in spite of the courts, invoke "freedom of press and of opinion." (This seeming paradox has led to lively discussion in present-day Germany, where people often feel unsure of themselves in regard to both the definition and the prac-

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EVEN before Hitler, the conspicuous political activity of university students in Germany was nationalist and reactionary. Some signs that this situation has changed since 1945 is shown by the stubbornness with which a sizable party of the German student body today resists the return to public life of souvenirs of the Nazi past like Veit Harlan, Goebbels' one-time filmmaker. HILDE WALTER reports here the events that took place in this connection in several important German university towns at the beginning of this year. Miss Walter was born in Berlin and educated at the Berlin School of Social Work. For a time she was associate editor of the famous magazine *Weltbühne*, but left Germany in 1933 and is now an American citizen, and a free-lance writer in New York, contributing to many periodicals both in this country and abroad.

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tice of their new freedoms.) The heavy costs of Erich Lueth's defense, and of his successive defeats in a long series of appeals, were for the most part met by small individual contributions from all circles of German society, with many prominent figures and countless organizations lending their support. (The constitutional aspect of the question is still to be decided by the new Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe, established in September 1951, with which Dr. Lueth has filed a complaint.) All through 1951 protest groups and public figures in many German cities tried to prevent the exhibition of *Immortal Beloved*, and in fact did succeed in having it banned in Munich and some other cities; protests also kept the film from being shown in Switzerland.

In late 1951 and early 1952, Harlan went on a speaking tour in order to "enlighten" the public about himself. In both Erlangen and Marburg he told audiences of young people who had been only children or adolescents when he made *Jew Suess*, that he had been forced under threat of death to direct it. But he was quickly reminded that the Terra film company's producer, when assigned this favorite project of Propaganda Minister Goebbels, had deliberately entrusted the scenario to such incompetent writers that Goebbels had been repeatedly dissatisfied with the results, and the production of the movie constantly postponed. When Harlan, not in the least unwillingly, had taken on the assignment, he made the condition that his name be given top billing, not only as director but also as author of the script, and he demanded that a role be created for his wife, Christina Soederbaum (this was responsible for one of *Jew Suess*'s most inflammatory scenes, the rape of a blonde girl by the Jewish villain).

Yet Harlan declared to the students of Erlangen that his enemies did not bother him so much as some of his self-proclaimed friends who were anti-Semites and thought they had found a fellow believer in him: "I repudiate them and declare that I find them repulsive, uncultured, and stupid." If this repudiation was sincere—which is quite possible, even probable—it unfortunately came much too late. For in the meantime Harlan had become, willy-nilly, a symbol behind which all anti-Semites and unreconstructed Nazis were rallying in Germany.

All this was known to the university students of Freiburg when Harlan's second movie, *Hanna Ammon*, was announced as a forthcoming attraction by a Freiburg cinema in January 1952. A body of these students placed the issue before the student parliament. At the same time they printed leaflets and got permission from the rector of the university to distribute them. According to municipal law, such leaflets could be circulated on "academic soil"—that is, within the university buildings—without bearing the names of their publishers or printers, as was required elsewhere in Freiburg. But when the students began handing out their leaflets on the outside steps of the main university building the police immediately stopped them, declaring that the place was on a "public street" where leaflets without a statement of their origin were subject to confiscation, and their distributors to arrest.

The anti-Harlanists could not obtain a majority in the student parliament for their proposed protest demonstration against *Hanna Ammon*, but they gathered signatures for a petition and sent a delegation to the South Baden Minister of the Interior to ask him, once again, to prohibit the showing of a Harlan movie. A few students together with some young trade-unionists, no more than twenty or thirty persons in all, tried on their own initiative to break up the première of the movie, on January 12, at which Harlan made a personal appearance. They whistled during the performance, whispered loudly, shouted "*Pfui* Harlan!" and dropped small stink-bombs of a harmless kind they had bought in novelty stores. Some of the audience reacted with indignation and anti-Semitic and anti-Catholic remarks. As reported almost unanimously in the newspapers, such cries were heard as "You priest's brood!" "You Jewish hirelings!" "Down with

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the Jews, *heil* Hitler!" And: "I haven't seen anybody yet in a gas oven!" The police commissioner, who arrived during the tumult, had the ridiculous idea of having the audience vote on whether the performance should be continued; the majority said yes.

Up till then the anti-Harlan students, still hoping to win over the majority of the student parliament and to march in the name of the entire student body, had postponed notifying the local police in writing, as required by law, of their plans for a public demonstration. But the Minister of the Interior had assured them verbally that the police would protect them when they did demonstrate, and would behave more "tactfully" than on the steps of the university building.

So on January 16, having given up the hope of support from the student body as a whole, between two hundred fifty and three hundred students marched from the university to the movie house where *Hanna Ammon* was being shown. They carried three or four large placards, one of which read: "People who make anti-Jewish movies cannot make any more movies in Germany!" Six hundred onlookers had gathered to watch them on their way. Among these were many youths whose appearance was not very reassuring; some eyewitnesses described them as "a mob."

Some members of this "mob" tore a poster out of the hands of the students at the head of the column and threw it to the ground. The police did not move. But the students remained calm, picked the poster up, and continued their march. At this point a policeman in uniform rushed up to them, his club raised, and screamed *"Plakat 'runter!"* When the student holding the poster failed to lower it, the policeman struck him on the wrist several times until he let it fall. A moment later a group of plainclothesmen fell on the other students with rubber clubs and beat them until uniformed policemen "came to the assistance" of the attackers and arrested every student who had tried to defend himself. Three were taken to the hospital with serious concussions, and a girl student suffered a hemorrhage of the spine in addition to a concussion. Other injured students were able to go to their homes, where they told investigators of the brutality with which the police had behaved. Meanwhile the arrested students were being beaten bloody in the police station (though no charges were ever placed against them).

Onlookers who had urged the police on with anti-Semitic cries, and the policemen themselves, spread the rumor later that the students had been the attackers and that several people had been hurt by them. But no non-student was found who showed the slightest trace of an injury.

THE first official reaction was the prohibition by the Prime Minister of South Baden of any further showing of *Hanna Ammon*. The city council expressed its indignation at the behavior of the police, the Freiburg newspapers ran detailed and objective stories of the event, and the university rector sided with his students. Editorially, the leading papers supported the demonstrators, and U.S. High Commissioner McCloy, visiting Freiburg on January 21, told the university body that if he were a student he too would have demonstrated against Harlan. The majority of Freiburg's citizens, however, insisted on their right to see the movie undisturbed. The ban on the film was lifted June 13, and on June 17 the Freiburg students held a protest meeting at which a member of the faculty declared that "it is more important for the German people to make peace with Israel than to make peace with Veit Harlan." Later, about a thousand students demonstrated peacefully before the two theaters showing the film, and the police on this occasion seem to have confined themselves to maintaining order. One student went on a hunger strike, and, in further protest, the students called off a meeting at which funds were to be collected for "peace with Israel," feeling that such a meeting could have no meaning so long as Harlan's film was being shown.

In Goettingen, in the north, the student body is predominantly Lutheran, unlike

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Freiburg's, which is divided about equally between Catholics and Protestants, and Goettingen is regarded, whether rightly or wrongly, as a sort of haven for pro-Nazi students. On the other hand, there also exist well-organized democratic student groups, who had demonstrated in 1951 against the revival of dueling fraternities at their university. Hence some political tension was already present.

On January 25, nine days after the original fracas at Freiburg, a number of Goettingen students demonstrated publicly against the forthcoming showing of *Hanna Ammon* in their city. They, too, carried placards and posters, and shouted in unison against the return to the public scene of a former accomplice of the Nazis; they also called for the final liquidation of Nazi anti-Semitism, for "peace with Israel." This time civilians as well as policemen attacked the demonstrators; there is almost no doubt that organized bands of hoodlums were involved.

Four days later, on January 29, the rector and forty-eight professors of the University of Goettingen announced their support of the demonstrators, and rebuked those newspapers that had run distorted accounts of the incident. They proclaimed further: "Without endorsing the form of the demonstration in all particulars, we recognize it as a sign of the existence among academic youth of a sense of political responsibility that moves them to enter the lists vigorously against anti-Semitic and undemocratic tendencies."

In Muenster too, with its predominantly Catholic university, the students organized a protest against the Harlan movie. There, neither the police nor the citizenry, nor even other students, opposed the demonstration, and the movie was quickly withdrawn. (Truly, the Kingdom of God still reigns in Muenster, as it did in the 16th century under heretics!)

ACCORDING to all reliable reports, the majority of the pro-Harlan public consisted neither of concealed former Nazis nor of neo-Nazis. Even the extent of anti-Semitism was much debated by the students. Clara Menck, writing in the March 1952 issue of the Berlin magazine *Der Monat,* reported that her investigations in Freiburg seemed to indicate that while anti-Semitism did exist in many cases and emerged as a secondary element in many more, the main impulse behind the hostility was a fear of "legal insecurity." For very understandable if not laudable reasons, most Germans wish to break with the past by simply forgetting it; when any public figure such as Veit Harlan is attacked for his past, many others begin to fear that the whole question of Nazi affiliations might be reopened for everyone, and in defending Harlan they defend themselves. As one citizen, a dentist, put it: "Now they've denazified me, they're starting the show all over again with Harlan. What's there left to depend on?" This attitude, Miss Menck reports, was expressed in all sorts of ways, from the appeal to "legally established rights" to mere vague abuse.

In addition, many Freiburgers felt anger at what they regarded as "guardianship" exerted over them by an academic group. A manual worker described the students as "lousy kids," and a twenty-two-year-old beautician said, "They're not much older than I am, and what do I know about all this?" (Certain structural changes in German society found expression here. In Freiburg, as in other university cities, the university man has long since lost his old glamor.) Most generally, of course, there was a simple anger at being deprived of a pleasure. "It's a first-rate German movie, you can cry at it so nicely." Or: "We work hard and we want a chance to see movies we like." A young worker said, "Why don't you protest first against Wild West movies?" A Catholic youth said that it would be better to take action against "immoral films."

ADDED to the latent anti-Semitism and the fear of the past that came to the surface in all the excitement, was the rage of unpolitical people at "the politicians." As if "the police force" were an abstract, unassailable institution of guaranteed integrity, the fear was often voiced that the police

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might become "a football of the politicians."

A very general need was felt to brand the students as "agitators" and, by condemning their demonstration, to protect the hard-won peace and order of the "average citizen." In a public discussion of the disturbances arranged by the Freiburg Association for Civil Rights, a spokesman for these embittered citizens asked: "If [the students] always keep on talking about good and evil, what will be left of the law?" Even those on his own side laughed at this.

In the course of these discussions, the guilty policemen and the owner of the movie house, whose financial interests had been damaged by the prohibition of *Hanna Ammon*, cleverly exploited this unpolitical desire for peace and order to defend their own actions. They even insinuated that the motives of the student "agitators" were questionable. The rumor suddenly spread all over the city that the students had been "bought and paid for." Hundreds of people asserted that each student demonstrator had received 12.50 marks and a supper, promised them in advance.

As to the question of who would have handed out three hundred times 12.50 marks, together with as many suppers, there were various answers, some of them contradictory. "Higher quarters" were mentioned, or even "the Church," "the Archbishop," "the government." Surprisingly, very few said that "the Jews" had paid for the demonstration.

Defenders of Harlan included a few admirers of his two postwar films; most critical opinion, however, considered both films aesthetically worthless mixtures of brutality and emotionalism. Only once during his "lecture" tour was Harlan, usually a skillful defender of himself, at a loss for an answer; that was when a girl student at Marburg, after listening to his dramatic speech of self-justification, very calmly asked: "Then why do you make such trash today?"

It seems unlikely that political motives—or Nazi sentiments—played a major role in the brutality of the Freiburg police. The Nazis had been weeded out of the local police forces in Western Germany more carefully by the Allies, as a rule, than out of many other organizations. (It did turn out that one of the two or three officers in charge of the plainclothesmen had been a Nazi who falsified his records in order to get his job.)

What really provoked the reaction of the police seems to have been the widespread German assumption that citizens—in this case the students—ought to "behave" and not start trouble, no matter what the occasion. As representatives of the legal government, the policemen felt entitled to go all out in putting down public commotions of any sort, political or otherwise; the police have often acted with similar brutality against students demonstrating for entirely unpolitical reasons.

The concept of the rights and responsibilities of the citizen that Miss Menck found among so many Freiburgers was a very limited one, hence the readiness of the local police to react with brutality against any public manifestation of opinion by individuals acting on their own initiative as the citizens of a democracy are assumed to have the right to do.

WHAT about the students themselves? What led them to their action against Harlan? Who were they? Miss Menck reported on this, too, in *Der Monat*.

Especially interesting is the fact that even the most active among the demonstrating Freiburg students represented no political or philosophical "unity." Their origins, their upbringing, and even their motives for political action, varied greatly. Only one common past experience characterized a relatively large number among them; this was experience of life in the Eastern Zone of Germany or in other countries behind the Iron Curtain.

Among the 4,200 students of the University of Freiburg there were only one hundred and twenty refugees and expellees from the East. These, though of varied political and social backgrounds, were more strongly represented in the demonstration than the native West German students, showing themselves just as opposed to Nazi

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tendencies as they were to the Soviet regime that had driven them from their homes.

Only about a third of the principal actors in the demonstration had grown up in anti-Nazi homes. One of these was the girl student who suffered concussion and hemorrhage of the spine; she declared that she hated demonstrations and parades and took part in them only through a sense of duty. The Nazis had imprisoned her father for his part in a Catholic war prisoners' relief organization; she herself had refused to do service in the Nazi organization for girls. She despised people who "made too much" of their sufferings under the Nazis, and said that one had to "watch out for the impenitent Nazis."

The only demonstrator of Jewish origin was a twenty-three-year-old philologist who taught at the Institute of Semitic Studies. He had escaped from the Third Reich to Palestine, had there become converted to Catholicism, and then returned to Germany. He said the State of Israel was too nationalistic, and he was more critical of neo-Nazi tendencies in Germany than were the other students.

A twenty-six-year-old Catholic student of theology was much occupied with the problem of how Christian forgiveness was to be reconciled with political unforgetfulness. Under the Third Reich he had been active in the underground Catholic youth organization of Baden, and then had spent a year in the trenches and three years as a prisoner of war. He had been particularly active in organizing the demonstration against Harlan.

A twenty-three-year-old refugee from the East earned his tuition as a factory worker. Originally a musician, he had begun to study economics because of his interest in politics. His family had met such a dreadful fate under Hitler that he refused to speak about it. While in bed with the concussion he had received from a police club, he analyzed his own motives and set them down in writing: " 'What has this man [Harlan] really done to you?' you ask and thereby assign everything *we* have lived through to the past, to oblivion. I, too, do this, for sometime there must be an end to the eternal desire to settle accounts. . . . I, too, would have wished that this man might have covered himself with the cloak of the past. But this he did not do. And therefore . . . he will do in the future what he has done in the past, even if he does not do it in the present. I inquire after the character of this man, after the appearance of a reality that I can respect; for the character of our fellow men, their faith, is the security for our future life together. . . . But I inquire in vain, and that is the reason for my actions. . . . Every democracy is a form of chivalry. We young people must stand on guard lest this chivalry, which is the sum of all the practical and theoretical restraints we set upon ourselves, be abused."

Another student, the son of a wholly unpolitical family of officials who had suffered nothing under Hitler, said that the anti-Harlan action was a necessary protest against forgetfulness. He himself could still remember the pogroms against the Jews. And he added: "One must see to it that people take an interest in the problems of the state."

A gentle, nervous student wounded in the war—a student of psychology in his second semester—had gone along with the demonstrators in spite of his physical handicap and been beaten by the police, although he had pointed to his war injury. He was interested in the problem of the influence of films on the public, and had earlier worked to bar young people from seeing bad gangster films. He said: "Anything is possible with a man who turns out *Jew Suess* and then makes films at which people can 'cry so nicely.' "

A Sudeten German from Prague, twenty-seven years old, studying history, philosophy, and the history of art, readily admitted that in 1939 he had welcomed Hitler's march into Prague as an "intoxicating release," and had regarded the concentration camps as merely a sort of "intensified imprisonment." But as a German soldier he had seen the liquidation of the Lublin ghetto. He could not forget it, and felt that the lot of his own family, when it was driven out of Czecho-

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slovakia, had been a kind of compensatory justice. "One was able for the first time to conceive of what such a thing was like," he said. And on Harlan: "On the basis of my own experience, I cannot reproach him for having made *Jew Suess*; but he should keep to himself now and remember how difficult it is for Germany to win respect again."

A twenty-four-year-old student of theology —apparently Protestant—expressed an "intractable hate against everything National Socialist"; he was led to take part in the demonstration against Harlan primarily by "regard for the feelings of the Jews and of other countries."

Among the demonstrators, along with confirmed anti-Nazis, there were a large number of young people who had been indifferent or neutral under Hitler, and even some former Nazis. But in all cases there was a vivid consciousness of the Nazi past, and a burning sense of the need to face the past and actively make up for it. Almost none of the demonstrators was younger than twenty-two or older than twenty-eight. This generation had experienced the Third Reich and the war with full awareness, but had not been as long in the army as the older age-groups, many of whom were now too busy catching up with their professional and private lives to participate in public matters.

The reactions of the indignant moviegoers of Freiburg have only reinforced the determination of these students not to remain passive in political questions. They want especially to influence the younger people, the eighteen- to twenty-year-olds, who knew little or nothing of the Third Reich and have taken little interest in it.

THE Freiburg students who fought against the "will to forget" are a minority in their university, but they do not stand alone in the academic life of Germany. It may be too soon to draw definite conclusions, but it would appear that a good section of Germany's new intellectual class have resolved not to repeat the mistakes of their elders. In the last days of the Weimar Republic too many intellectuals, even when not seduced by Hitler, remained paralyzed, while the anti-Nazis among them surrendered too much of their personal initiative to political parties. These younger intellectuals, who gave us a sample of their mettle in the anti-Harlan demonstrations, have a new concept of citizenship and of their responsibility as intellectuals. They are ready to act on their own to defend the democratic order, and—perhaps even more important in the context of recent German history—to accept the consequences of their acts.

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AMERICA, LAND OF THE SAD MILLIONAIRE

Abraham Cahan's Legend Succeeds Horatio Alger's

ISAAC ROSENFELD

I HAD long avoided *The Rise of David Levinsky* because I imagined it was a badly-written account of immigrants and sweatshops in a genre which—though this novel had practically established it—was intolerably stale by now. It is nothing of the kind. To be sure, it is a genre piece, and excellence of diction and sentence structure are not among its strong points; but it is one of the best fictional studies of Jewish character available in English, and at the same time an intimate and sophisticated account of American business culture, and it ought to be celebrated as such.

The story is a simple one and fundamentally Jewish in conception, as it consists of an extended commentary on a single text, somewhat in the manner of Talmud. This text is presented in the opening paragraph:

> Sometimes, when I think of my past . . . the metamorphosis I have gone through strikes me as nothing short of a miracle. I was born and reared in the lowest depths of poverty and I arrived in America—in 1885—with four cents in my pocket. I am now worth more than two million dollars and recognized as one of the two or three leading men in the cloak-and-suit trade in the United States. *And yet . . . my inner identity . . . impresses me as being precisely the same as it was thirty or forty years ago. My present station, power, the amount of worldly happiness at my command, and the rest of it, seem to be devoid of significance.*

I have set in italics what I take to be the key sentences. These express Levinsky's uniquely Jewish character, as they refer to the poor days of his childhood and early youth ("my inner identity") when, supported by his mother, he devoted himself to the study of the Jewish Law. Nothing in a man's life could be more purely Jewish, and his constant longing, through all his later years, for the conditions of his past confirms him in an unchanging spirit. But the remarkable thing about this theme, as the late Abraham Cahan developed it, is that it is, at the same time, an exemplary treatment of one of the dominant myths of American capitalism—that the millionaire finds nothing but emptiness at the top of the heap. It is not by accident that Cahan, for forty years and until his death the editor of the *Jewish Daily Forward,* and identified all his life with Jewish affairs and the Yiddish language, wrote this novel in English (it has only recently been translated into Yiddish). He was writing an American novel par excellence in the very center of the Jewish genre.

It seems to me that certain conclusions about the relation between Jewish and American character should be implicit in the fact that so singularly Jewish a theme can so readily be assimilated to an American one. I am not suggesting that Jewish and

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Since its first publication in 1917, Abraham Cahan's *The Rise of David Levinsky* has had the status of a minor classic, part of the American naturalist tradition and of the Jewish "contribution" to America—in short, a book well spoken of and very rarely read. ISAAC ROSENFELD, himself the author of a novel about Jewish life in America (*Passage from Home,* 1946), here takes a fresh look at Cahan's book, published in a new edition this year by Peter Smith, and points out in what ways the career of David Levinsky is splendidly representative not only of American Jewish experience but of the general American ethos. Mr. Rosenfeld, a frequent contributor of fiction and criticism to this and other periodicals, is assistant professor of humanities at the University of Minnesota. He was born in Chicago, in 1918, and studied at Chicago, Wisconsin, and New York universities.

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American character are identical, for the Levinsky who arrived in New York with four cents in his pocket was as unlike an American as anyone could possibly be; but there is a complimentary relation between the two which, so far as I know, no other novel has brought out so clearly.

David Levinsky was born in the Russian town of Antomir in 1865. His father died when David was three, and he lived with his mother in one corner of a basement room that was occupied by three other families. "The bulk of the population [of Antomir]," writes Cahan, "lived on less than . . . twenty-five cents . . . a day, and that was difficult to earn. A hunk of rye bread and a bit of herring or cheese constituted a meal. [With] a quarter of a copeck (an eighth of a cent) . . . one purchased a few crumbs of pot cheese or some boiled water for tea. . . . Children had to nag their mothers for a piece of bread." But Levinsky's mother, who "peddled pea mush [and did] odds and ends of jobs," was kind to him and indulgent, "because God has punished you hard enough as it is, poor orphan mine."

At the usual early age, Levinsky was sent to *cheder*, where he was made to feel very keenly the disadvantages of poverty, as his teachers risked nothing in punishing a poor boy. His mother would intervene for him (this impulse was to prove fatal) and fought with many a *melamed* for laying hands on her David. In spite of the humiliations and hardships, she maintained him in *cheder*, and after his Bar Mitzvah sent him to Yeshiva (Talmudic seminary) at an even greater sacrifice, as it meant he would not be in a position to relieve her distress by learning a trade. She was determined that he devote his life to God, and he showed great aptitude for holy study. He soon distinguished himself as a student, but his sexual instincts began to distract his mind. His contacts with women, as was the case with all Yeshiva students, were extremely limited. It was considered "an offense to good Judaism" for a pious man to seek feminine company, attend dances, dress in worldly fashion, or in any other way to behave as a "Gentile." Naturally, these restraints only multiplied Levinsky's temptations. He would do penance, undergo a period of religious exaltation, and again fall into sin (in his mind).

The next great event in his life was the death of his mother. Levinsky, in earlocks and black caftan, was attacked by Gentile boys on his way from the Yeshiva. When he came home bruised and bleeding, his mother, against his entreaties and those of their friends and neighbors, ran to the Gentile quarter to avenge him. This was the last time he saw her alive. She was brought back with a broken head.

It is a credit to Cahan's economy as a writer and to his grasp of character that at this point, in the sixty-odd pages which I have summarized, he has already drawn so convincing a picture of Levinsky, including all essential details, that Levinsky's subsequent adventures in the old country and America, his further encounters with poverty and with women, the rest of his intellectual development, and his ultimate transformation into a millionaire, have all been fully prepared. I will therefore cut off the exposition and attempt some generalizations which may serve the understanding of the whole of Levinsky's character and perhaps help explain how the old-world Yeshiva student is essentially an American in ethos.

Levinsky's character was formed by hunger. The individual experiences of his life—poverty, squalor, orphanage, years of religious study and sexual restraint, the self-sacrificing love of his mother and her violent death—all these experiences contain, as their common element, a core of permanent dissatisfaction. This dissatisfaction expresses itself in two ways: first, as a yearning for fulfilment, where it operates to win for him all the goods and values he has been deprived of—wealth, dignity, a "father principle" as well as a substitute for his father (as shown in his passionate attachment to

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Reb Sender, with whom he studied at the Yeshiva), the pleasures of intellectual liberty that attend his break with Orthodoxy, the pleasures of sex, and unrestrained access to the society of women, though he goes among them mainly to find a substitute for his mother. (These are the positive "Americanizing" tendencies of his discontent.) At the same time, dissatisfaction has become an organic habit, a form which determines his apprehension of experience in general, and actually directs the flow of experience his way, so that he is not merely the result of what has happened to him, but on the contrary, the events in his life are predetermined, in large measure, by what he has already become. In the second sense, dissatisfaction is unending; instead of providing the urge to overcome privation, it returns every fulfilment, by a way no matter how roundabout, to the original tension, so that no satisfaction is possible.

Thus Levinsky is a man who cannot feel at home with his desires. Because hunger is strong in him, he must always strive to relieve it; but precisely because it is strong, it has to be preserved. It owes its strength to the fact that for so many years everything that influenced Levinsky most deeply—say, piety and mother love—was inseparable from it. For hunger, in this broader, rather metaphysical sense of the term that I have been using, is not only the state of tension out of which the desires for relief and betterment spring; precisely because the desires are formed under its sign, they become assimilated to it, and convert it into the prime source of all value, so that the man, in his pursuit of whatever he considers pleasurable and good, seeks to return to his yearning as much as he does to escape it.

Levinsky's entire behavior is characterized by this duality. In love, he is drawn to women he cannot have. They are either hopelessly above his rank in wealth, sophistication, and culture, or married and faithful mother-surrogates, or simply not interested. The women who do find him attractive fail to move him. He goes to prostitutes, one frustration feeding the other.

His accumulation of wealth, which he wins through perseverance, ingenuity, and luck, is also of this pattern—it, too, represents a loss, a virtual impoverishment. Before he turned to business enterprise, Levinsky had entertained serious academic ambitions. Though he had broken away from Orthodoxy, shaved his beard, adopted American dress, and gone to night school to learn English, he had retained his Talmudic intellectuality and love of scholarship. He took a job in the garment industry only as a means of sending himself through college. The event to which he attributes his becoming a businessman fell on a day when he was having his lunch in the factory. A bottle of milk slipped out of his hands as he was trying to open it and spilled on some silks. His employer, Jeff Manheimer, who witnessed the accident, broadly made fun of his clumsiness and called him a lobster. The humiliation festered, and that very day Levinsky decided to steal the boss's designer and go into business for himself. This is the reason he gives, but it is a rationalization. He would never have entered business and gone on to wealth had it not been necessary to sacrifice something—in this case his desire for learning. And when he obtains great wealth, it makes a circle, joining the pattern of his love life by condemning him to loneliness, as he suspects all women who smile on him want only his money.

So with everything. All things in Levinsky's life are divided, alienated from themselves, and simplicity is impossible. But no matter how many transformations it undergoes, his hunger remains constant. He longs for his wretched boyhood (which appeals to him "as a sick child does to its mother") from which, were he able to re-enter it, he would again be driven in an endless yearning after yearning.

Now this is a profoundly Jewish trait, our whole history is marked by this twist. The significant thing about the structure I have been describing is that it is not confined to single personalities like Levinsky, but is exactly repeated on an impersonal

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and much larger scale in Jewish history, religion, culture—wherever our tradition and its spirit find expression. Consider *Galut*, the Diaspora, through the centuries in which it has dominated Jewish life: the theme of the Return, of yearning for Eretz Israel, to which are linked Cabala and Messianism, modes of prayer and worship as well as modern political and social movements, so that the whole becomes a compendium of Jewish activity *per se*—the yearning for Israel runs through the Diaspora in no simple sense, as of a fixed desire for a fixed object. It is a reflexive desire, turning on itself and becoming its own object. This is the meaning of the passage: "If I forget Thee O Jerusalem. . . ." The yearning is itself Jerusalem, as in the words ". . . if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy," and it is to this yearning that the good Jew remains faithful. Otherwise, why the proscription of temporizing in *Galut*, of making any compromise with desire, no matter how small, even down to the obdurate and seemingly ridiculous prohibition of shaving the beard? The hunger must be preserved at all cost. This theme is taken up and elaborated all through Yiddish literature, receiving its ultimate ironic sanctification in the work of Sholom Aleichem, where squalor, suffering, and persecution become the "blessings of poverty," signs and stigmata of the condition of being Chosen, "for which the whole world envies us." The character of David Levinsky, therefore, does not stand alone, nor does he come, with his four cents, unattended to the American shore. He drags the whole past after him, being himself the Diaspora Man.

But what is so American about this? Nothing directly, especially if I am right in calling Levinsky the essential Jewish type of the Dispersion. And yet in the character of the American businessman and in the surrounding culture that his figure dominates, there is also such a twist, a similar play on striving and fulfilment. We worship success; all the same it is on process and origin that we place the emphasis of gratification, seldom on the attainment as such. The value of the successful man's career lies in "rags to riches," it is defined in our saying, "He worked himself up." Of those who are born to wealth we say, "Poor little rich boy." Now this, I am aware, is folklore, and there is a great deal of irony in it, too. Nevertheless, our favorite representation of the rich is of a class that doesn't know what to do with its money. It has brought them no real accretion of happiness, and the process of accumulation, on which the emphasis falls, is manifestly a self-destructive one, as it never can be stopped in time: the successful man faces the futility of retirement. He, too, loves to dream about his boyhood in an unreal *askesis*, having for the most part been ashamed of the ascetic impulse (poverty, we protest too much, is no disgrace) which he has concealed under a conspicuous acquisition; and yet he is not enough a materialist to enjoy his goods as they come to him and welcome the spiritual consolations that worldly pleasures bestow. "Money isn't everything," he will say, making more, and he says this to preserve an air of disconsolateness, as though virtue were impossible without a sour face. He does all this for show, but unconsciously his affectations hit upon the truth. All his life he is at loose ends, and expert only in ennui, which Tolstoy defined as the desire for desire, cousin to Levinsky's yearning. And even if none of this is true, and there is (as I strongly suspect) a direct gratification in wealth as such, it is still significant that most of us profess it to be true, clinging to a protective disenchantment.

Whatever the case with our much disputed and still, I suppose, amorphous American character, Levinsky, the Diaspora Man, had relatively little to overcome (speaking inwardly) to grow into the typical American of fortune. Only the environment was alien to him, but its inner loneliness was anticipated in his own, for one loneliness is much like another; and the very fact that the American environment was alien, and would remain so, to his Jewish-

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ness, enabled him to make good in it on his own peculiar terms—to satisfy everything but hunger. To be sure, his is only a single career, a single example of the Jew as American, but it draws our attention to the considerable structural congruity that must underlie the character and culture of the two peoples. And if Levinsky's career is understood in its essentially Jewish aspect, it may explain why the Jews, as an immigrant group, were among the first to achieve a virtually flawless Americanization.

I HAVE purposely refrained from treating David Levinsky as a fictional character and have spoken of the novel as though it were the actual memoir of an American Jew, in tribute to Cahan's power of characterization. Such immediacy of revelation is the novel's strongest quality, and Levinsky is made to talk about himself not only with an authentic accent, but with a motive in disclosure verging on something sly—precisely as such a man would talk. This well-known and widely-respected businessman tells the truth about himself, his love affairs, his efforts to outsmart the unions, the way other men tell lies—to see if he can get away with it! But as fiction, Cahan's writing lacks continuity: his transitions from subject to subject tend to be abrupt, with a perseveration in the linking of sex and economics. Thus when he describes Levinsky's broken engagement (the cause was his falling in love with another woman), Cahan devotes less than twenty lines to the scene, and opens his very next paragraph (after a line space, but this may have been the typographer's doing) with the words, "Our rush season had passed. . . ." Often the trains of thought collide within the single paragraph, business plowing into everything else. True, Levinsky's mind would work this way, and the habit would also serve him the purpose of saying, "I may not be doing so well with the girls—but think of the money I'm making." (Though business is meaningless to Levinsky, one of the most touching insights of the novel is provided by Cahan's showing how he succumbs to a businessman's vulgarity of tone and manner, and berates himself for the weakness.) Yet it is not always possible to distinguish character from author, and this failure in detachment, the consequence of an imperfectly developed ear for nuances in language, becomes noticeable and sometimes quite confusing when there is no lucky congruity to justify it, as in the matter of the abrupt transitions from pleasure to business.

But these flaws, as I have already indicated, are of minor account. So much so, that I wonder what the critical reception and, no doubt, misunderstanding, of *The Rise of David Levinsky* must have been, that it should languish in the status of an "undiscovered" book, a standard footnote or paragraph in surveys of American Jewish literature, and not be known for the remarkable novel it is.

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ISRAEL'S COMMUNISTS AND FELLOW-TRAVELERS

Their Role in Strengthening "Neutralism"

MARK ALEXANDER

A STOCK phrase of official Zionist propaganda until recently was: "There are no Communists in Jewish Palestine." Or, if there were any, they were very few and belonged exclusively to the lunatic fringe that plagues every society.

This may have been true enough fifteen or even ten years ago—as long as the official Communist line was one of a fundamental opposition to Zionism. The extreme Zionist left was then bitterly anti-Communist, and hardly any Jews in Palestine fellow-traveled. But important changes have occurred since the recent world war, and especially since the establishment of the State of Israel. Not only does Israel's official Communist party, known as "Maki," now have several thousand members, with an even greater number of voters; but her third largest party, the United Workers, called "Mapam," has in recent years swung almost all the way over from Zionism to out-and-out Stalinism. And at the same time, fellow-traveling, neutralism, and "progressivism" have become more and more popular, as the country labors under its grave economic crisis.

OF THE three pillars of Stalinism in Israel, the official Communist party, Maki, is the least important politically, and the least interesting. Though no better or worse than most Communist parties, it is small and uninfluential, and in recent years Mapam, for reasons of its own, has tried to create the impression that the Israeli Communists are inferior examples of their species. But this is untrue: Maki has grown since the establishment of the new state; in 1951 it received 4 per cent of the total vote, and right now would have a good chance of getting 5 per cent.

At least half, and most likely more than half, of Maki's members are Arabs, the party—for obvious reasons—being much stronger among them than among the Jews. It has also been successful in getting a foothold among the immigrants in some of the new camps, settlements, and suburbs—especially among those from Bulgaria and Iraq. However, many of these new recruits were already either party members or close to the party in their countries of origin. Some of the left-wing Zionist youth movements have been infiltrated, notably Hashomer Hatzair, groups of whose members have gone over *en bloc* to the Young Communist League, known by its initials as "B.N.K."

The significance of these accessions of

THE ignorant slander that Israel is somehow "Communistic" has gained no currency in the face of the patent fact that its dominant political viewpoint and economic patterns are the products of a movement that has bitterly opposed Communism from its birth. During the long years of Jewish settlement in Palestine, the Communists were a minuscule and despised sect. But in the few years since the establishment of the State of Israel, there have been disturbing indications that the Communists have become considerably stronger and, more important, have developed a strange and hardly comprehensible influence over a major Israeli party, the Mapam. MARK ALEXANDER, who lives in the Middle East and is a close observer of events there, analyzes the nature of Communist influences in Israel and tries to explain why, despite the violent anti-Zionism and barely-veiled anti-Semitism of the "anti-cosmopolite" campaigns of Eastern Europe, Communists have gained ground. Mr. Alexander's article on "The Near East's Communist-Fascist Front" was published in the May COMMENTARY; he has written frequently for *The Twentieth Century* (London) and other periodicals.

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new members and supporters should not, however, be exaggerated. The Communists have had similar successes, though on a much smaller scale, over the last twenty years in Palestine, and have not yet been able to hold more than a small fraction of the new recruits. Most leave after a year or two, join other parties, or lose interest in politics altogether. The rate of turnover in its membership, never published, must have been enormous ever since the Communist party was founded in Palestine in the early 1920's. In this respect, again, Maki is no different from Communist parties elsewhere.

Nevertheless, Israel in 1952 is more fertile ground for Stalinism than it used to be. Until 1947 the Communists opposed the very idea of a Jewish state and Jewish immigration in Palestine; consequently, they could never hope to influence many Jews in Palestine, aside perhaps from those who wanted to leave. But since the official Soviet declaration of sympathy with Jewish Palestine in 1947 and 1948, the party has reconciled itself to the existence of an independent Israel, and although it continues to oppose Zionism on principle, it has successfully evaded most attempts to force it to take an unequivocal position on the issue. Now, for the first time, Maki no longer functions in a vacuum, but with solid ground under its feet, and can come forth as a champion of "patriotism" and Israeli "independence."

The past history of the party still burdens it nonetheless. Thirty years of Communist struggle against Jewish settlement in Palestine, and the Jewish national movement as such, carried on with both propaganda and bombs; fifteen years of cooperation with the ex-Mufti, and then the "peace with Hitler" campaign of 1939-41—to be reminded of all this can be very discomfiting. Yet it should not be forgotten that three out of four adults in Israel were either in some other country in 1938, or only of kindergarten age, and are therefore susceptible to the preposterous claim that the pre-1948 issues of the official Communist newspaper *Kol Ha'am*, brandished in anti-Communist propaganda, were forged by the British police in collaboration with Jewish anti-Communists. When pressed hard enough, however, the Communist leaders usually admit that grave mistakes were made in the past, but counter by asking whether anyone else can deny having made mistakes, and by asserting that the present leadership of the Communist party in Israel was not responsible for the "deviations" of the past.

MAKI is probably one of the rare Communist parties in the world that not only lacks an official history, but does not even print newspaper articles devoted to the study of its past. This is a serious handicap, but then the number of historically-minded people in Israel is certainly no larger than anywhere else, and the number of those willing and able to learn anything from the past is even smaller. What interests the average immigrant from Iraq or Bulgaria is not historical arguments but immediate issues like housing, food, and working conditions. All his grievances are exploited by Maki, and if it were headed by people of real competence, instead of the nonentities who make up its present leadership, it could have made much greater headway.

But a shortage of leadership material is not Maki's only trouble at present. It also faces many objective difficulties. The anti-Jewish — "anti-cosmopolitan" — campaign in the Soviet sphere is one; "Jewish nationalism" is another. Like all Communist parties, Maki has to subordinate local and national interests to the higher interests of the "homeland of socialism." This may be relatively easy in European countries where nationalism has faded as a paramount political force, but it is another thing entirely in a country that has just won her national independence.* Add to this the fact

* The resolution of Maki's Twelfth Party Congress in May 1952 signified, according to most observers, a partial return to the traditional anti-Zionist line. The party recognized the existence of the State of Israel, but not its present frontiers, and demanded that all territory not assigned to Israel by the UN decision of November 29, 1947 should be ceded by her and go to make up a new

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that Israel's isolated position in the Middle East negates any sort of anti-militarist propaganda; yet this kind of propaganda happens to be one of the foremost tasks of the Communist parties today. Maki might argue plausibly that Israel is not threatened by Soviet Russia, but it cannot convince the Israelis that the threat of a "second round" is unreal. Should the "anti-imperialist" forces supported by Russia in the Arab countries come to power, the danger to Israel would be even greater, since these movements are all rabidly anti-Jewish. Thus, to advocate pacificism in Israel these days is suicidal for any political party, and Maki must realize it.

Intellectually and ideologically, Maki functions on an even lower level than the average Communist party of our day. Six out of seven contributions to its ideological organ, *Baderech*, are translations. Whether from inability or caution, party members abstain from writing or publishing anything on such tricky subjects as "Stalinism and Jewish History," "Israel and the Jewish People in the Light of Marxism," etc. Nor has a single book on the history or the theoretical or specific problems of Israel and the Jewish people appeared under Maki's auspices. A handful of people who can be classed sociologically as intellectuals are to be found in the party's leadership and on its periphery, but none of them plays an important political role, or has attained prominence in his own field of work.

Kol Ha'am ("Voice of the People") has the smallest circulation of the twelve Hebrew dailies in Israel, and the lowest cultural level. But this is no reason to underestimate the influence of the paper and its party; it simply means that Maki does not cater to what is called in Communist jargon the "working intelligentsia," or to the general Hebrew newspaper-reader. Over the last few years, by a kind of division of labor between Maki and Mapam, the former has become by and large a party, not of the proletariat, but of the culturally backward sections of Israeli society in general, while Mapam is the one that talks Stalinism to the working class as such.

THERE are scores of parties like Maki in the world, but only one Mapam. Mapam might be likened to Nenni's Socialists in Italy, but this would be misleading because Nenni has no line of his own, nor are there *kibbutzim* or a Zionist movement in Italy. Ideologically, Mapam has surrendered unconditionally to Maki and the Cominform. It may take a few years more for the inevitable consequences of this surrender to become clear, but it is no longer a question of principle, and the time period depends mainly on international developments. Political differences are still debated inside Mapam, but a minority, a quarter or perhaps even a third of its membership, are bound to split away sooner or later, and then all internal controversy will cease. Though the present debates may have a certain topical interest, they are not very relevant to the party's future.

Up to the Second World War, Mapam was a Marxist, radical, left-wing party. Hashomer Hatzair, Ahdut Avoda, and Left Poale Zion, which united to make up Mapam, were all in sharp opposition to the Comintern on the Zionist issue; most of them also condemned the Moscow Trials, the pact with Hitler, and the Finnish war; they criticized the internal development of the Soviet Union and the policies of the Communist parties in general, and attacked them for their utter subservience to Moscow. These left Zionist parties established contacts with the Independent Labor Party in England, with left socialists in France and elsewhere, but not with the Comintern. Since then, however, there has been a radical change in the attitude of all but a very few of the Hashomer Hatzair leaders; and a sizable minority of the other two groups have gone along with them.

independent Arab state. This would include something more than one third of the present territory of Israel. Thus Maki has again been put on the defensive, politically speaking, in Israel, and is now denounced by all the other Israeli parties for its championing of Arab national interests.

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This change is due to a multiplicity of factors that are hard to define in relation to each other. The importance of the Soviet Union's change to a favorable attitude toward the Jews of Palestine in 1947 and 1948 should not be minimized, but, as previously noted, the effect of this on Israeli opinion has been at least partly canceled by the "anti-cosmopolite" and anti-Jewish drives behind the Iron Curtain, and the USSR's continued opposition to Zionism as a movement. And those features of Stalinist policy that the Mapam leaders criticized so bitterly ten and twelve years ago, the anti-equalitarian tendencies inside the Soviet social structure, the imperialist trend of Soviet foreign policy, the subservience of the non-Russian Communist parties to Moscow—all these have become even more marked. Nonetheless, Mapam has in recent years been drawn as by an irresistible magnet closer to the orbit of Stalinism.

ANY serious attempt to explain this puzzling situation must go back to the past. People tend to hold on to the political attitudes they form in late adolescence, and the leaders of Mapam, and especially Hashomer Hatzair, are no exceptions. Twenty-five years ago most of them were high-school students at the Jewish *Gymnasia* of Poland, Lithuania, and Bessarabia; Zionism and—even more fundamentally—orthodox Marxism were the main intellectual influences to which they were exposed. Then came training as Zionist pioneers, then emigration to Palestine at the age of eighteen or twenty, then the kibbutz, and finally careers as *askanim*, or community leaders. Surrounded ever since reaching maturity by urgent immediate problems, they have lacked the time, the calm, and even the inner impulse to sit down and re-examine their basic attitudes and assumptions. Marx, Engels, and Lenin have continued to serve as their highest authorities on philosophy, politics, and history. More recent Western political thought has not reached them, since many of them do not know English or French. Originally, their main contact with the West was through the German socialist press and literature, but that well dried up twenty years ago. Some of them know Russian and used to follow developments in the Soviet Union, but the direct illumination received from this source during the last twenty-five years was hardly calculated to throw new light on the teachings of the "classical masters of socialism." All in all, the attitude of the average Mapam leader to the Soviet Union has not changed at bottom since he left school in Warsaw, Lodz, or Vilna, and it remains the sensational and romantic one of the 1920's, when the great Russian Revolution was still in its "heroic" period, engaged in the building of a new society, and proclaiming internationalism, equality, and cultural freedom to the world.

Clinging as they did to the Marxism and Leninism they had imbibed in the 1920's, many of the leaders of Mapam began to feel after the war that their previous anti-Stalinism had been a symptom of the "infantile malady" of radicalism. What counted for them now—after the impact of fascism, followed by the Russian victory—was that the means of production in Russia and the "popular democracies" had been "socialized," and, as Marxists, they felt this to be the decisive criterion. There were some other leaders in Mapam who had reservations and privately criticized the USSR for its imperialism and totalitarianism, doubting whether the abuses of its system were of transient nature; but they too were, and are, Marxists; and they believe in the inevitability of the victory of Communism—even if it is Stalin's brand. And so they now hope to make the best of a bad situation by climbing on the bandwagon.

The majority of the older generation of the Hashomer Hatzair and Mapam leadership belong to this latter group. But this generation came from the larger cities of Eastern Europe, where Hashomer Hatzair had its main centers during the early 1920's, and their outlook is still cosmopolitan by comparison with that of the next, or second, generation in Mapam's leadership—those

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between twenty-five and forty—and of the members of the Mapam youth movements, who constitute the third generation.

Hailing mostly from small towns and villages of East Europe, the second-generation leaders of Mapam are relatively provincial in education and experience; Soviet or Soviet-influenced culture has been the only guiding influence in their lives, and Western ways still remain largely a mystery to them. Very few of this generation had had acquaintance with any democratic way of life before arriving in Palestine, and they still remain more impressed by Soviet-type totalitarian planning than by Israel's parliamentary regime. This makes them highly susceptible to Stalinist "logic."

It should be kept in mind, however, that my characterizations apply *only to a minority* of Mapam's membership, the *askanim*, the doers, the leaders, and the activists of the political groups in the kibbutzim. The average kibbutz member's interest in politics is, by contrast, quite limited, and the party militants have to work hard to spur him to action. But the average member also has practically no hand in the shaping of Mapam's policy, which is, after all, what we are interested in here.

But why should Mapam's "orthodox" Marxism bind it so closely to Stalinism? Stalin himself could reinterpret—nay, falsify—Marxism to make it consistent with his own departures from it. Why cannot Mapam interpret Marxism for itself and take an independent, or Titoist, course? Certain Mapamniks—notably in Ahdut Avoda—have indeed argued in this way, but they remain a minority. Besides, Stalinism owes its great prestige in Mapam, not to its ideas, but to Russia's military victories and to the successes of Communism since the war. Nor has Mapam the stomach any longer to struggle for high but abstract ideals in the wilderness, calumniated all the while by Stalinists as traitors to the socialist cause. It has chosen, rather, to be a small spoke in a big and powerful wheel.

Thus the party has moved over to the Stalinist camp for opportunist even more than for ideological reasons. This opportunism does not aim at immediate political or material advantages; it could be better described as a refined way of surrendering one's ideals or principles. The Mapam leaders, being far from naive, know that most if not all of them would be purged, together with the present leaders of Maki, were a "people's democracy" to be installed in Israel, and if they continue to advance the cause of Stalinism it is because they are victims of a profound fatalism. Hegel said that whatever was real was also rational. Stalinism is real, and the Mapamniks believe that it will become even more real in the future. And it is better to be on the side of the real, and therefore rational, and lose one's head, than to be against it and lose one's head anyway. . . .

Mapam has now begun to cooperate closely with Maki, its old and despised rival. In the past it would not deign to notice Maki; now it apologizes publicly whenever Maki charges it with behavior unbecoming to a prospective member of the Cominform. Mapam has also begun to limit its collaboration with the other Zionist parties to a minimum, and the extremists are already suggesting that the party now secede from the World Zionist Organization altogether. There is, however, small chance that it will do anything of the sort in the near future. For a severance of relations with the Zionists and all-out opposition to the government's economic policy would hurt the material interests of the kibbutzim, which have become more than ever the main basis of Mapam's strength now that it no longer has a position of its own and so many of its members in the cities are faltering in their allegiance.

Relations between Mapam and the Communists became somewhat strained—though most likely only temporarily—after the Maki conference in May. The Mapam daily paper published a series of articles criticizing — rather apologetically — the new Communist program and charged Maki

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with misinterpreting Communism in the light of Israeli necessities, because it rejected the idea of a "territorial concentration" of the Jewish people. This *terminus technicus* has been used by Mapam more and more frequently instead of "Zionism," which sounds too disreputable in Communist ears. The official Communists replied by urging Mapam to give up its running fight with Maki and follow its lead. "But what place will be granted us in the Israel outlined by Maki?" asked a Mapam writer in *Al Ha'mishmar*. "The very same place that has been granted, after a year or two, to all collaborators with the Communists in Eastern Europe," answered a Mapai paper. (It should be noted, however, that one of the Hashomer Hatzair leaders, Meir Yaari, now in Mapam's right wing, smuggled a few quasi-Zionist statements into a speech he made at the "world peace conference" in Berlin this past July. He was not well received.)

But except on issues that concern Israel directly, Mapam has swallowed the Cominform outlook hook, line, and sinker. It even supports the semi-fascist "anti-imperialist" movements in Egypt like the Moslem Brotherhood and Ahmed Hussein and his henchmen, and it also supports the Soviet plan for an independent reunited Germany with an army of its own. The leaders of the Ahdut Avoda faction have from time to time raised halfhearted objections, but their group has no influence in the party, and in any case sooner or later its members will leave Mapam or be expelled.

Mapam has retained a measure of independence on such specific Israeli and Jewish issues as the demand that Jews be allowed to emigrate from Soviet Russia and its satellites, and the refusal to accept the internationalization of Jerusalem. Yet even these positions are on the way to being abandoned.

The late Andrei Zhdanov has been installed as Mapam's highest arbiter in things cultural. Thus Freud is now being replaced by the great Pavlov, which means changing Hashomer Hatzair's whole educational system. A rearguard skirmish is being fought by those who still see some sound ideas in psychoanalysis, but there is no doubt about the final outcome. Freud, together with most of Marx, and with Herzl and Borochov, will be jettisoned on the last lap of Mapam's journey towards Moscow.

THOUGH most Mapam leaders are head and shoulders above those of Maki in character and intellect, they now make a practice of humbling themselves before the latter and asking forgiveness for past sins. This is only a foretaste of things to come. In the end, the Mapam kibbutzim will have to be liquidated or changed over into collective farms on the kolkhoz model—simply because Mapam cannot afford to be more progressive than the Russian collective farms and thus violate the principle of Soviet priority in all things.*

Hashomer Hatzair now plays the only decisive role inside Mapam. The left Poale Zion group will probably split away in a few months—perhaps to join the Lamdan-Lifshitz group, which seceded several months ago in an effort, unsuccessful so far, to found a new Israeli workers' party. The future of Ahdut Avoda, which has wavered for many years between "centrist" Luxemburgism and Leninism, is even more uncertain. For years now it has been steadily losing ground to the majority in Mapam simply because it has had no line whatsoever with which to counter Hashomer Hatzair's very clear and positive policy of identification with Stalinism. Yet as much as Ahdut Avoda is opposed to the rest of

* Mapam now plans, at a conference to be held in August, to adopt the organizational method of the Communist parties—"democratic centralism," which means the elimination of internal factions and free discussion. Ahdut Avoda is opposed to this, while the pro-Zionist wing of Hashomer Hatzair (Hazan, Yaari, Bentov) appears ready to compromise. The anti-Zionist wing of Hashomer Hatzair (Sneh, Y. Riftin, Rubin, as well as Mishmeret Zeira, the Mapam youth movement) would like to oust the Zionist elements from Mapam altogether in order to create the conditions for its merger with the Communist party. It appears most likely, however, that such final decisions will be deferred for the time being.

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Mapam on ideological grounds, it is even more opposed on personal grounds to Mapai, of which it once was part.

Mention should also be made of two non-ideological bodies in Mapam that overlap at times but not always: the "cynics" and the "disillusioned." The cynics, a small but influential group, are led by a comparatively recent recruit from right-wing Zionism who in the last few years has made himself the most authoritative leader of Communism in Israel. Those whom Moshe Sneh speaks for are the hundred-per-cent Stalinists who never falter in their belief because they simply don't believe. Some of them never were Marxists or socialists; others lost their convictions some time ago and now put all their money on Stalin only because they think he will win out in the Middle East and they hope to make a political fortune by it—though the fate of Rudolf Slansky and of their own comrade, Mordechai Oren, in Czechoslovakia, has lately dampened their zeal a little.

The disillusioned include a number of prominent members of Mapam who are by now deeply disappointed in their own party as well as in Communism and the Soviet Union. They admit privately that they ought to be fighting against Stalinism instead of for it; but their families and most of their friends live in the kibbutz, and once they chose to oppose Stalinism openly they would have to leave the kibbutz and start life over again elsewhere. This is a decision few are willing to make, especially when they have families. And so these people live like Marranos, and look for peace of mind in things like coin-collecting, archaeology, and scientific poultry-breeding.

The third pillar of Stalinism in Israel is formed by the neutralists, the cultural "progressivists," and all the various breeds of fellow-travelers in general. These groups have been little noticed abroad, but are taken for granted in Israel as perfectly natural phenomena. Their influence on public opinion is great—far out of proportion to the relatively small number of writers, artists, scientists, public and semi-public figures who actually do fellow-travel.

The Soviet Union's stand on Palestine in the United Nations in 1947 and 1948 won her a good deal of favor among Palestinian Jews. And because of Israel's delicate position internationally, the government felt afterwards that an "objective" attitude in domestic politics was imperative, assuming that "objective" was synonymous with neutrality between East and West. Thereby a No Man's Land was created in public opinion that lasted until 1950, and into which Stalinism was able to make successful inroads. To this day Stalinism holds on to many of the gains then made—and it would have made more had not the slogans launched by Maki and Mapam over the last year been somewhat too extreme for the public's taste.

The least important of the fellow-traveling organizations in Israel are those sponsored by Maki. The few members of the Democratic Women's Association, for example, are pretty well aware that they belong to a Communist front, and nobody is fooled. One Maki-sponsored outfit, Tarbut L'am ("Culture for the People"), specializes in soliciting money from Jews who used to belong to or sympathize with Communist parties in Eastern Europe and have since gone to France, Argentina, or Canada and become affluent. Their contributions are supposed to ease them of pangs of conscience caused by the memory of their radical past. Their money goes to support the Hebrew Communist daily *Kol Ha'am* and a number of periodicals in other languages, as well as to subsidize a housing project for the leaders of Maki. If Tarbut L'am sponsors any genuinely cultural activities, they are shrouded in deepest secrecy.

The front organizations in which Mapam and Maki cooperate are much more influential. These include an Israeli "peace" committee, with special sections for doctors, lawyers, etc., and Israeli-Soviet, Israeli-Czech, Israeli-Polish—and so on—friendship societies. Though the latter are comparatively inactive, the "peace" committee has

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staged many meetings, demonstrations, and congresses: against bacteriological warfare, against prominent "warmongers" visiting Israel, against – and for – German rearmament, and so on, depending on what happens to be Stalin's order of the day.

The Stockholm Peace Appeal received, allegedly, four hundred thousand signatures in Israel. This would be the largest proportion in any country this side of the Iron Curtain, but we can safely subtract a third of these signatures, which, according to reliable information, were appended at second- and third-hand, and in other fraudulent ways. Nevertheless, the success of the Peace Appeal in Israel is undeniable, and faces us with the unpleasant fact that, in addition to those who voted Mapam or Maki at the last elections, at least a tenth of the adult population of Israel – and probably more–fell for the Communist "peace" line. The lack of initiative in the matter shown by Mapai and the other anti-Communist parties is at least partly to blame.

AMONG Mapam-sponsored fellow-traveling organizations, as distinct from Maki's, are the Center for Progressive Culture, the Workers Library, some bodies of lesser importance, and a number of literary periodicals published under the auspices of Mapam itself. The Center for Progressive Culture arranges weekly talks on such topics as the virtues of Soviet "socialist realism" in the arts, the superiority of Pavlov's psychology over psychoanalysis, and so forth. The Center also celebrates the anniversaries of both the older and newer saints in the Stalinist calendar–Gogol, Balzac, Leonardo da Vinci, Victor Hugo – with prominence given to whatever appropriate quotations can be found in Lenin or Stalin. The Workers Library is probably the largest single publishing house in the country. In the past it "deviated" by publishing writers like Silone, Hemingway, Freud, and Otto Bauer (to name a few), but now it conforms faithfully to the Zhdanov line and publishes only safe authors like Howard Fast and Louis Aragon, and Soviet writers. The younger Israeli writers associated with the Center for Progressive Culture view "socialist realism" with a certain reserve, to say the least, but are rather reluctant to break with the Center because it is one of the few publishing houses that give young writers a chance.

Israeli fellow-travelers are all enthusiastic about Soviet culture–except for those manifestations of it that happen to touch on their own field of endeavor; in every other area they are quite willing to accept Stalin's guidance. The poet laureate of Mapam thinks highly of Soviet music, but would rather not discuss Soviet verse; and privately, the painters of Mapam hold Russian art to be beneath contempt. The leading pro-Communist psychoanalyst of Israel voiced his low opinion of Soviet psychology in the "bourgeois" press, but this did not prevent him from being as active in the "peace" movement and the society for Soviet-Israeli friendship as any other "progressive" scientist, artist, writer, or philosopher.

While the West sends Israel machines, food, and money, the East sends her books, magazines, and newspapers. The unavailability to the general public of books and serious periodicals from America, England, and France over the last two years has served to cut the Israelis off from any of the new ideas that circulate in the West–and as a matter of fact from any real knowledge and understanding of the political character and social conditions of Western countries, especially the United States. Russian books and magazines, on the other hand, are sold at ridiculously low prices. There has, in fact, been a great rise of interest in Soviet publications in general, so that Russian-language teachers are in great demand now. Since 1950, American culture has been represented in Israel mainly by comic books, some of the mass-circulation magazines, and bad movies–grist for the mills of the "progressives," who assert that this is all the culture the United States has to offer Israel.

ISRAELI neutralism is not very different in essence from neutralism elsewhere, say

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in France. But it is perhaps a little less sophisticated, and with a certain angle of its own. Stalin's favor, or at least tolerance, continues to be sought after, and so one tends to refrain from criticism of the USSR or of Communism in general—in accordance with a tradition that began in 1947. To criticize Communist activities outside Israel, it is argued, may cause countries like Rumania to stop emigration to Israel altogether; the only way to help the Jews behind the Iron Curtain is to be reserved and discreet. As Jews and Israelis, it is felt, there is too much to lose otherwise.

Neutralism as such is found chiefly in the center and on the right, while the non-totalitarian left is remarkably free from it. To be sure, the left may doubt the wisdom of Western policy in the Middle East and fear that too close an Israeli identification with the West might lead to appeasement of the Arabs, but the right and center are not swayed by such tactical considerations when they plump for neutralism pure and simple. They argue that, since Soviet hostility is directed almost exclusively against the United States, the Middle East would not be a main front in a future war and could perhaps be kept out of the war altogether. Therefore Israel ought to do everything possible to stay aloof; she should strengthen her army against a possible Arab aggressor, but not voluntarily grant military bases to the West or enter into a Middle Eastern defense scheme. The fallaciousness of this line of reasoning does not have to be pointed out here. Yet a sizable sector of public opinion in Israel backs this line.

The responsible political parties in Israel have done little, as I have said, to counteract pro-Soviet and neutralist tendencies. Mapam's and Maki's subservience to Soviet interests ought to make them an easy target for a nationalist party, but Herut is only a caricature of that. The General Zionists are too busy fighting Mapai to take cognizance of how much more Stalinism is to be feared than democratic socialism. The Mapai leaders have as a rule taken a broader view, but they are so deep in the day-to-day business of administration that they cannot give much attention to issues that are not, to them, of immediate importance.

Mapai makes another error: it fails, alarmingly, to appreciate the importance of public relations, and for that reason, among others, the government gets the worst possible press in Israel. The Israelis have done remarkable things in the last four years, and news of this could be made the most effective antidote to Stalinist propaganda, but these achievements have been reserved strictly for export and never brought home to the inhabitants of the country itself. The government-controlled radio is perhaps the only effective means the Ben Gurion administration has of influencing public opinion, yet, for fear of seeming biased, it tries to avoid controversial issues, and thus Communism either at home or abroad is rarely criticized in its broadcasts.

This is one example. A second concerns one David Courtney, a British journalist who won much friendship in Israel for his outspoken criticism of British Mandate policy before 1948. Since then, however, he has become a totalitarian liberal—say, the equivalent of Alvarez del Vayo (a comparison Mr. Courtney himself certainly won't resent). But del Vayo is one of a hundred and more magazine commentators on foreign affairs in the United States; David Courtney is the columnist on foreign politics for the *only* English-language daily in Israel.

IT WOULD not do to try to predict the future of Maki, Mapam, Stalinism, and fellow-traveling in Israel too specifically at this moment. Israel is a small country, and what happens will depend largely on developments elsewhere. Still, this does not mean that much, much more could not be done, some of it by the United States, and certainly much, much more by American Jewry, which has a large stake in this development, to strengthen the courage and convictions of that great majority of Israelis who do not want to wake up one day to find that they have become citizens of a "people's democracy."

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NAME-CHANGING—AND WHAT IT GETS YOU

Twenty-Five Who Did It

J. ALVIN KUGELMASS

MANY Jews in the United States like neither their names nor their faces, and many take surgical steps to have them corrected. There are no available statistics on plastic-surgery nose operations. But there are rough statistics on applicants to state courts to change family names: about 50,000 a year. Of these, around 80 per cent are Jews; thus, estimating four persons to a family, 160,000 shed or modify their Jewish cognomens annually.

State courts make little fuss about granting applications for changes of name unless the applicant is a notorious criminal. The process is a simple one. An affidavit swearing to hardship under the burden of the name is attached to an order, the order is submitted to a judge who almost never asks to see the applicant, and the relief is granted.

But only a very small percentage of all such applications are based on obvious hardship. A younger brother of Al Capone asks for permission to call himself Rayola; the relatives of a wholesale murderer similarly request and are granted permission to change their name. One can also appreciate why twenty-seven persons named Hitler felt it necessary to change their names, and perhaps one can understand the patriotic motives which during the First World War led the Battenbergs, relatives of the British royal family, to change their name to Mountbatten. With Jews, and other "minority groups," the matter is more complex.

ALMOST half the Jews who change their names are content with a simple foreshortening: Levenstein to Levin; Rubinstein to Rubin; Rabinowitz to Rabin; Myrowitz to Myron; Gluckenspiegel to Gluck. No effort to hide their Jewishness here—simple convenience might explain the matter: the shorter name is easier to spell over the phone and fits comfortably on any dotted line. But one suspects conformity, too: are people named Throckmorton or Hollingsworth quite so ready to cut out a syllable?

What of the near 60 per cent who go in for more drastic alterations; who reach for the niftier names, such as Pierce, Stanfield, Dean, Hadley, Holmes; or retreat into the obscurity of Brown, Baker, Jones, Lewis, Smith? Whether they choose fancy or flat, it is an odd kind of thing to do in America. Understandable in xenophobic France or homogeneous England that someone with an outlandish name should want to lose his "foreignness." But in the polyglot United States alien names, like alien origin, are almost as much the rule as the exception, as a glance at the telephone book, a list of the honored war dead, names on a good football team, or a list of contributors to the Red Cross will show.

But apparently many Jews find such considerations of little weight compared to the

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WE ALL know someone who has grown tired of his "outlandish" and "Jewish" surname and tried to make life easier by shortening or "Americanizing" it. Do the name-changers get what they want? J. ALVIN KUGELMASS asked this question of a random group of Jews who had changed their names, and reports here the perhaps surprising response. Mr. Kugelmass is the author of a biography of Louis Braille, and a book of his about Ralph J. Bunche will appear late this year. He has worked as a copy editor and reporter on various leading newspapers, and as a foreign correspondent. He was born in New York City in 1910, and attended Columbia University. Mr. Kugelmass's interest in the present subject was to some degree stimulated by questions suffered by him as to why he did not do something about his own "cumbersome handle," which somehow he has never felt any desire to change.

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felt burden of their Jewish label. Look at the record: Half the Jews in the armed forces during World War II bore non-Jewish last names, it is asserted in an article in *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*. To Jewish chaplains—I spoke to a dozen of them—it was a commonplace for Private Jones or Sergeant Lewis to help in the distribution of *yarmelkas* before services, it was routine for them to write home to Momma and Poppa Osborne when son Louis was killed or wounded. Or, to take the testimony of a lieutenant colonel of the Graves Registration Command: "We soon became accustomed to placing stars over graves of GI's with an H on their dog tags but with the most un-Jewish names you can imagine." As an afterthought, he added: "I'll bet a lot of anti-Semites would be disturbed to find how many Jews with non-Jewish names hold the most coveted medals. You might have a good story in that all by itself." I myself have seen innumerable soldiers' graves in France where the Star of David stands marked with such names as Franklin, Johnson, Hamil, Sheppard.

Why do they do it—and what do they achieve by it? In an effort to find out, I selected at random from court files in New York City, Chicago, and Los Angeles twenty-five individuals whose owners had for more than a year sported drastically changed (not merely abbreviated) names. The geographic distribution may not have been of the best for an over-all view, but at least it spanned the nation. Small-town Jews, I should have mentioned, don't seem to go in for name-changing; whether it's because they don't care or they feel they couldn't get away with it, there is no way of knowing.

The twenty-five selected were sent the following questionnaire:

1. Why did you change your name?
2. Was it social or economic pressure?
3. What is your occupation and your economic level? Is it over or under $5,000 a year?
4. Did your wife press you to change your name? Did she resist or encourage the change?
5. Now that you have a new name for about a year,
   (a) Do you observe any marked change in your economic and social life? What change, if any?
   (b) What is the attitude of Gentiles to you and your new name?
   (c) What is the attitude of Jews and relatives to you and your new name?
6. Are you pleased with the results or do you wish you had your old name back?

A COVERING letter assured the recipient that his anonymity would be preserved, offered references as to the writer's integrity, and urged the subject to write as fully and freely as he wished.

No one answered. Either the letter and the questionnaire were tactless or the name-changers highly sensitive. I incline to the latter view.

Pollsters frequently get better returns by using the phone. So I developed a further list of twenty-five names within local or limited long-distance radius. These twenty-five included physicians and dentists (who are the most enthusiastic name-changers), teachers, salesmen, office executives, pharmacists, photographers, an army officer, a civil service worker, a defense worker, and an engineer.

There seem to be few persons in the so-called menial or laboring classes and occupations among Jews who change their names. A check with labor unions which have a high membership of Jews, such as the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, and the Furriers Joint Council of New York, showed that no rank-and-file member has asked for a new card under a new name, at least not in the past ten or fifteen years. To check further, calls to lodges such as the Masons, Knights of Pythias, Odd Fellows, and other fraternal and benevolent orders where Jewish membership is high, revealed that the only Jews who

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asked for membership cards under new names belonged to white-collar occupations. The circulation departments of three Yiddish newspapers in New York and one in Boston said that they do not recall a change of name among their mail subscribers within the past twenty years. These were informal responses made without checking of files, yet they can probably be taken as correct.

THE second list of twenty-five subjects included people who lived and worked in New York State, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania. Within a week, making night calls to catch the husbands at home, I had completed the interviews: where the first twenty-five had maintained an apparently resentful silence, all of the second group spoke freely once the awkward preliminaries had been got over. Perhaps the cold questionnaire sent to the first twenty-five deserved their cold silence.

The second group not only spoke easily, but were eager to volunteer information and to go into gratuitous detail. There was in most cases a veritable rush of words, the telephone calls seeming to operate as opportunity for a kind of confession. That there was indeed a heavy sense of guilt in each case could be seen in the eagerness with which the respondents sought to prove they were "still Jews"; in no case could I sense even the remotest inkling of a wish to abandon their Jewishness.

Yet in each case, the choice of a distinctly "Gentile" name seemed evidence that there had been some impulse towards concealment of Jewishness. Perhaps if that impulse had been successfully carried through, the sense of guilt might not have been so obvious; and the subjects might not have been so anxious to explain, to apologize, to make little of it. Perhaps if the change of name had done the job it promised to do, if there had actually been a new life after the change, the subjects would not have been willing to talk at all. But life had not changed, and one sensed a certain frustration that demanded expression.

Without exception, all twenty-five said that they had been fools. Since the names had been selected at random as one might stick a hatpin into the pages of a telephone book, this unanimity is a most impressive fact. Never in my experience as a newspaperman have twenty-five persons, questioned by phone on any subject, shown such agreement. The phrase used in nineteen of the twenty-five conversations was: "I was a damned fool." The other six said: "I am sorry I did it."

The change of name from, let us say, Schwartz to Seward (there is no reference here to actual persons), brought no happiness, no change of luck, no increase in income, no broader social horizons or easier acceptance or enhanced status. None had moved to a different city: Jews who change their names are for the most part established people, earning good incomes where they are, and, as success is measured, they are sucessful where they are. They have invested their lives in achieving what they possess, and to move would mean to begin all over again. Staying where they are, how could it make any real difference that Schwartz is called Seward? But obviously they had hoped it would.

TEN wives literally forced their husbands to relinquish the phone so that they could offer their reactions. Each admitted that the thing had been an adventure in betterment that had turned out badly. All toyed with the idea of going back to the old comfortable and familiar name, but all realized that they would not do so: it had been pointless to make the change and it would be pointless to retreat. "What's the use?" they said. "We'll stick it through and maybe it will help our children."

Eight of the ten wives said they had favored the change so as to get their children into medical school. But: "We're sorry now. If my son can't get into medical school because he's a Jew, then we'll send him to Scotland or to Paris. We shouldn't have started up the road of lying about our religion."

All of the twenty-five insisted that in changing their names and trying to conceal

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their Jewish identities from the outside world, they had not meant to withdraw from the Jewish community. Eleven said they were not only members in good standing of congregations, but occupied active posts on their congregations' committees devoted to cultural or similar subsidiary activities. One bragged that he was chairman of the membership committee. The congregations they belong to are about evenly divided between Orthodox or Conservative and Reform.

In hoping to overcome a real or fancied anti-Semitism, it was obvious that they were seeking not so much to escape Jewishness completely as to live a dual existence in which their private lives would be Jewish but their exterior lives would be as smooth and even as they fancied the Gentiles'. Some hoped for profit, some for social advantage, some thought of their children's future. All had been sure it was possible to lead a dual existence—Jew at home, Gentile on the calling card. Five of the twenty-five were detached enough to recognize the similarity between themselves and the Marranos who lived as secret Jews under the Inquisition in Spain.

But what impelled them to call their lawyers and set the process in motion on the day they did, remains fuzzy. All had thought about it for years, but as something that should be done "sometime." All gave confused reasons as to why at a particular moment they felt the time had come, and in most cases it could be said that the actual decision was made on a plane far removed from reality. It will be simplest, perhaps, to illustrate what happened through a few "case histories." (Each case has been altered somewhat to prevent identification.)

DR. T., an obstetrician with a good practice in a large New Jersey city, earns upward of fifteen thousand a year, has a good car and a new home in the suburbs.

"For several years," he said, "since I went into practice, I've been trying to get a staff appointment at one of the hospitals. When I was turned down year after year, I wasn't impressed with the fact that they had a Jewish doctor on the staff. I thought they were pointing to the lone Jew to prove that they weren't anti-Semitic. Many anti-Semitic organizations hire one Jew for that purpose. I was told that the bed capacity of the hospital simply did not permit an additional visiting obstetrician. I disbelieved them and hoped for the best when my name was changed. Perhaps then, I thought, even though they would know I was a Jew, they might not be so reluctant because the name on the published annual report would not disturb the Gentile contributors upon whom they count heavily."

No, he still hasn't received the appointment. And a less biased investigation which he made after the adoption of his new name convinced him that the hospital was indeed overstaffed and simply had no room for the patients he would bring in. Thus, he confessed, the "anti-Semitism" of the hospital administration had existed solely in his own imagination.

But he had still other reasons for changing his name. "My office is in a part-Jewish and part-Gentile district. I thought Gentile women had been staying away in droves. I found later that here too I had been brooding over an unreality, for my practice comes mainly from referrals and it so happens that Jewish women in my neighborhood mingle only with Jewish women and thus refer only Jewish women."

A third reason he gave, and this stemmed from the difficulties he had had in entering a medical school under the Jewish quota system, was his hopes for his son. "I want my boy to study medicine and I thought with a non-Jewish name he would stand a better chance." However, he admitted sadly that his son is aggrieved about his new name, is jeered at by his teen-age companions and classmates. "The whole thing was foolish and I'm a damned fool. I was running away from my Jewishness and there not only is nothing to run away from, but you can't outrun it no matter how hard you try."

Leon P., an engineer, works for a big firm and felt himself kept down because he is a Jew. "My salary wasn't bad at all. Engineers,

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even Jewish ones, are in great demand these days, despite the long history of anti-Semitism in the field. But all about me, I fancied that I saw Gentiles getting promotions, both in title and salary, and naturally I thought of the obvious. So I oriented my name, quit my job, and went over to another company."

Within two months, he was called in by an executive of his new firm and given a handsome raise and topflight assignment. "So I told my wife: 'See, I was pretty smart for changing our name.'" But that very night he was called up by an executive of his old firm who naturally called him by his former name. The man said: "I am sorry you left us because we have something for you that's right up your alley." The engineer told him frankly that he had quit because he was sure that he had been discriminated against in advancement. His former boss was astonished: "That's not true. If you wish, I'll be glad to show you a file of interoffice correspondence on you which will prove that we were just waiting until the right project came along so that we could use you and boost you."

"I was a fool," said he. "The anti-Semitism was only in my head. Yes, I'm going back to my old firm but now I'm in a pickle because I wear a new name and I'll be embarrassed explaining it away."

A photographer, Morris F., felt that he was barred from a job with one of the big magazines because he was a Jew. He adopted a brand-new name with no remnants of the old one. "P.S.," he said, "and you can quote me on this: I still haven't got a job with a big magazine."

There is the civil service worker who felt that he was flunked out because he was a Jew when he took examinations for higher posts. There is the army officer who thought his superiors stood in his way because he was a Jew. "I began to feel like Dreyfus," he said laughingly. The civil service worker admitted that when he stopped brooding and began to take a realistic view, he realized that he had not passed the examinations because he was not trained to pass them: "I needed more courses in bookkeeping." The army officer says the change of name "slays" him, as he puts it, at the post. "I'll never live it down. It's done me more harm than anything I can think of. Whether or not I get a promotion no longer matters. What matters is that my fellow officers think I'm a kind of a fool. If there is anti-Semitism in the Army, my change of name wouldn't have helped one bit, because in the records I'm down as a Jew. How incredibly blind and stupid of me. Then, too, there's a certain kind of 'honor-above-all' mind in the army which despises me because by changing my name I revealed that I was ashamed of my own people, as they would put it."

IN THEIR personal relations with friends, family, and neighbors, the name-changers have a dreadful time. Meeting relatives at weddings, Bar Mitzvahs, or funerals, they're given frosty and curious stares by many of the tribe who bear the old name. As one man told me: "There's a great curling of the lip that you might call a sneer. I always wanted to know what a sneer looks like. I know now."

From Gentile neighbors, friends, and business associates there is often open contempt, as though the Jew had been "found out." Favorite phrases are: "You can't rub it off, you know," or: "You still look like Glockenspiegel to me, even though you've changed the brand." The most disturbing reaction from Gentiles is the dreary and sustained habit of slapping the name-changer on the back and pretending to forget that he has a new name: "Well, if it isn't my old friend Bernstein!"

Interestingly, it is not the third-generation Jews (children of American-born parents), as one might suppose, who go in for name-changing. A check with the City College of New York, Brooklyn College, Queens College, Columbia University, New York University, Harvard graduate schools, Hunter College, and Brooklyn Polytechnic—where there are heavy enrollments of Jewish students—shows that no more than a handful of Jewish students inform the registrars of changes of name. Name-changing is prac-

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ticed mainly by Jews now over thirty, mostly the children of immigrants.

In the opinion of county courthouse clerks, the rate of name-changing among Jews has gone up about 100 per cent since the close of the war. While Hitler was murdering Jews, the American Jew was sharply reminded of his identity and bore it with pride and a militant defiance. A plain-speaking theologian once said to me, "The Jews must be whipped every hundred years so that they do not lose their identity." While this latest whipping was going on, there was very little name-changing; since the end of the war, the rate has doubled. Perhaps, in the complex picture of Jewish "assimilation" in America, this too is partly Hitler's doing.

An interesting sidelight is the fact that almost no Jewish salesmen in the so-called "Jewish trades" change their names, even though they must in most cases go constantly beyond the confines of New York City into the "Gentile" hinterlands to earn their living. Jewish traveling salesmen (there are many thousands of them) find no discrimination in hotels across the land, and find no resistance to their wares because they are Jews—an interesting facet of the problem of economic discrimination against Jews.

WHATEVER the facts, however, there is no doubt that Jews widely believe in the existence of economic discrimination, especially in white-collar occupations and professions. All those I interviewed gave as their primary reason for changing their names the hope of economic betterment: a non-Jewish name, it was felt, would get that better job or expand the field of professional operations; secondarily, there was the hope that similar benefits might come to the children. In no case was there any concern—at least, any admitted concern—with such social gains as membership in restricted clubs, or acceptance at restricted resort hotels, or the ability to buy homes in restricted suburbs.

It is noteworthy that the change of name was followed in most cases by a greater and more intense Jewish consciousness. The new name was merely a facade to gain a hoped-for advantage. Behind the facade, and with a special emphasis no doubt called forth by the complications following the change, the Jew finds himself all the more a Jew.

Since name-changers are people of good income, property, and affairs, their situation has a ludicrous side—in the endless technical difficulties that follow court approval of the new name. The name-changer must get as many as fifty certified copies of the order granting leave for change of name. These orders must be sent, with appropriate correspondence, to mortgage companies, banks, utility companies, motor vehicle bureaus, insurance companies, telephone companies; government agencies such as the Department of Internal Revenue, the Social Security Bureau, the Old-Age Pension Bureau, Selective Service, the Passport Department, etc., etc.; boards of elections, commissioners of jurors, attorneys handling wills, companies in which stocks and bonds are held; realty tax offices, water companies, post offices, charge and installment accounts, magazines, fraternal organizations, unions, professional associations; dog-license bureaus, professional licensing offices, charities. The list is endless. Modern man lives at the intersection of an endless number of contacts and associations. A change of name creates a flurry that threatens to go on forever. "It's enough," said my twenty-five, "to drive one to suicide." Each carries a wallet bulging with papers.

All twenty-five would like their old, comfortable names back, but they cannot face the fearful confusion that would follow.

SOMEHOW one finds oneself thinking of the case of George Stanislaukas, who asked for permission to change his name to Sprague. Some twenty years later, Sprague petitioned the Chicago court for leave to change his name back to Stanislaukas. He said his friends made fun of him, persisted in calling him Stanislaukas anyhow, and simply couldn't pronounce Sprague.

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REFUGE UNDER THE EL

A Story

HAROLD NORSE

ALWAYS about the place hovers a tall ghostly shadow of the past, in winter and summer wearing a black Homburg, a brown pin-striped suit, and a blue serge overcoat. In winter and summer, Hermann, slowly and painfully, with quick little puffs, drags his long body shaped like a roller coaster into the restaurant and sits by the cash register fully clothed—except, maybe, for his hat. His body is soft yet rigid, his face fixed in an expression of suffering, the large beaten blue eyes staring horribly—as if he had just glimpsed something that froze him on the spot.

For three years now my only conversation with this numb and querulous man has been a polite *Hello!* on my part, in return for which I receive, invariably, a long Prussian-like salute of the right hand, chopping the air like a guillotine, murdering distance, approaching his eyebrow but just missing the face. In this way—I have come to understand—Hermann annihilates the long silences in which he lives. But only for a moment. Immediately, he relapses; his eyes float backwards, into the distances of the self. He is utterly useless to the busy but inefficient hive. Silently, he sits and stares out of the pale, cobwebbed china-blue eyes with the moths of old desires still fluttering helplessly in the irises. Distance and something unutterably lonely creeps in again, in spite of the salute. He is elsewhere.

In summer, they put a chair out for him, in front of the diner. There he sits for hours in the smoky sun, clad in suit and overcoat, his bald head, like a yellow agate, shining fiercely, the steamy death broiling in the skull. The resemblance to Bismarck is startling. Without the cruelty and the mustache.

Inside, the roar of the electric fan, dirty dishes clinking, orders shouted and bungled and confused. American efficiency is nowhere in sight. Like mobiles, idly turning, cards advertise 7-Up and Mission Orange, hanging from fluorescent-light strings above the counter. The walls are covered with ice cream and Coca-Cola signs. Behind the soda fountain, a streaked mirror tells of the zest and flavor of various floats and malted milk. Everywhere, in red and orange and yellow, women smile. Teeth and ice cream and Coca-Cola; but no efficiency. Flies, dust in corners, steam. The workers, during lunch hour, bawl their orders impatiently, swearing at the heat, the service. The proprietors have never caught on.

FRITZ is standing before me at the counter, his metallic lank hair, close-cropped, falling in one chromium wisp over his right eye. He just stands, as Hermann sits. He looks at me, in his fatherly, dumb way, saying nothing. Then, for the sake of communication, he says: Vair iss your freynd? (rhyming with *mind*)—and communication, warmth is established. Sometimes, he stands there, looking at me with affection during the entire meal, until I get up and go to the register to pay my bill. I wave goodbye to him and then the whole chorus—Zinka, Fritz, and Onya—chimes, Goodbye! Goodbye, Mr. Treece! Hermann salutes.

It is difficult to understand how they do business. In all my ten years of eating out, I have never seen such slowness, such sheer

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incompetence. Not a morning goes by without somebody's toast being burned or coffee spilled. The order is always misunderstood; you wait a half hour before you are served. Zinka is slow, bewildered, her mind and body protesting against age, against labor. Ahhh! I tought you said *scrambled* eggs! Ahhh! I'm *sor*-reee . . . vait a minute, Mr. . . . Don't go avay! Here, I gif you. . . .

The only sensible one, the only one who distinguishes between past and present and has managed to come to terms with both, is Onya, a peppery, red-haired little woman—bustling and intelligent. She is the manager, the entrepreneur. Around her, the wheel turns. Even at its slowest, she sees that at least it goes. But for all her activity, she is neither hard nor pushing—for they are compassionate, gentle people. They suffer for all the bums and trollops who perpetually seek handouts on Third Avenue.

How did they get to this restaurant, to Third Avenue? What are they doing here, these mild, stunned, pastoral people? Obviously, they know nothing of American business. They go along, year after year, at their own pace, and the remarkable thing is, they survive. Half their profits go in handouts and change. By that I mean, if you give Fritz a five-dollar bill for a sixty-five-cent breakfast, you invariably get back five dollars and thirty-five cents. He stands there, puffing his cigar, erect and smiling in a bow tie, returning more than you gave. And, to my own discredit, I must admit that most of the time, when I am in sore need, I have not told him of his error.

ONE of the oddest customers is Mrs. Healy, an old woman, fancy as a flapper. Her face is a powdered doughnut, dead-white. The lips are obscured behind an artificial, incongruous Cupid's bow of brilliant orange lipstick; and the phony eyebrows over her powerful glasses give her the unreal appearance of a clown who has cunningly obscured his original features behind a grotesque artifice. At night she is startling to meet; you can see the false face glowing like phosphorus in the dark. Her hair is hennaed sheep's-wool. After the other customers have gone, she enters and sits on a stool, drinking iced coffee or tea.

Ha! ha! She always comes in laughing.

Ho! ho! I just seen my husband. Quick, Zinky, gimme an ice coffee!

So? says Onya, with the musical inflection of cultured German. And how iss he?

Ha! explodes Mrs. Healy. He's O.K. I get what I want! Anything you want! he says. Well, Onya, it took me a long time to win *that* battle. Men—ha!

She looks around scornfully at the men in the restaurant—at me and at Fritz, who is lumberingly making the motions of washing dishes, a greasy, wet apron around his waist and the bow tie shining above like a flag of gentility. Hermann disappears at night, gone with his fierce and silent suffering.

Mrs. Healy sips loudly at her iced coffee through a straw.

Forty years it took me to learn about men, she says. They're no good! They used to chop my heart into a thousand pieces. Ha!—that's all over now. . . .

She turns her vacant enormous eyes upon Onya.

Ain't it turrible for us old buggers? We don't really feel nuthin no more, she says rather placidly.

Onya and Zinka look up and wail like a couple of withered Rhine maidens: Ah . . . yes. . . .

It is all over now, says Onya, philosophically.

Mrs. Healy takes a fierce sip at the dregs of her iced coffee.

And how! she chortles. But, ya know, I'm a lot happier than I used to be. My heart ain't broken no more. I can turn my fourth husband into a monkey. All he says is Yes, dear!

Yes, yes. . . . Onya remarks meditatively. It is harder when you are young. Now you do not have to worry about your figure any more. . . .

Mrs. Healy extracts some money from her purse.

Figure? Who worries! I gave *that* up long ago. I got plenty money now, too. Look, she

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says, her voice rising. I used to be awful dumb. My fourth husband and me takes a trip to Pennsylvania. Where I was born, on a farm. He says, You ain't so dumb for a backwoods girl. You sure know how to play me for a sucker. Ha!—I'll say! I learned from three of 'em—they almost killed me. It was him or me—I won! Ha ha ha ha. . . !

It's like the cackle of an old hen who has survived the fiercest roosters and shrewdest foxes. A chill runs through my spine. In that cackle of victory, I envisage a lifetime of despair.

For the first time since I've known her, Onya looks sad. She steals a glance at the stolid, unmoved Fritz, washing dishes. Her intelligent face is wistful.

Yes, she says, I am glad it is all over. When we were young, would you believe it, we were very jealous of one another.

Of *him*? Mrs. Healy shrieks, incredulous. Who'd be jealous of him? He looks harmless to me.

Oh, no! Fritz, you were not so harmless—*nicht wahr?*

Fritz looks up, and into the old man's face—I swear it—steals a roguish look, and he turns to me, breaking into a slow smile—and winks!

Mrs. Healy notices this.

You can never trust 'em! she snaps. They'll rob your heart and break it. Men! I wouldn't give ya two red cents for 'em!

Onya nods in agreement. But you've got to *fix* them, eh? she says sternly. Make them *behave*.

Her voice has taken on an unusual force and determination. Her eyes, for one brief moment, are stinging lances.

Immediately, I relinquish my long impression of their life as a placid, genteel couple. Instead of a stolid, even-tempered old man and a cultured old woman, whose musical voice and warm compassion make our tough little environment seem barbarous, I am aware that something hidden, confined, has floated up to the surface. I see a struggling, squirming knot of snakes, the tangle of biting mouths that eat the viscera of those you always greet conventionally.

Well, who cares now, anyways? I should worry! shouts Mrs. Healy, easing herself gradually off the stool and grunting. That's all dead and buried. . . . Who'd look at that old bugger now, huh? Answer me that!

The old man bows his head and fumbles with a dish. The day is almost over for them. Onya is cheerful again. She tells her sister, Zinka, to take Mrs. Healy's change. Mrs. Healy, on her way out, crows in a loud voice, I wouldn't be young again for all the money in the world! I'm better off than my grandchildren. Yeah—I mean it! Ain't you? Ha!

She disappears, her face like luminous paint in the dark.

WHAT shall I do? asks Zinka, leaning across the counter beside the cash register. Mr. Treece, you are an educated man.

She is telling me the story of her son, Johnny. He goes to the movies every day and won't study. He listens to the cheapest radio programs and has no ambitions, not even to pursue pharmacy.

When we were young, croons Zinka, we read Heine and Schiller.

Du bist wie eine Blume, I recite.

Ah, you know, you know. . . . Zinka's ugly features, the thick lips and incredibly large buck-teeth, break into a warm, homely smile, and the Rhine and the Alps glitter. Ah, Mr. Treece, we went to concerts, read novels. . . . What shall I do with Johnny, please? Tell me. . . .

I don't know. It's a different world. You can't do anything.

That is true. I feel I make somewhere a mistake, but I do not know. Well, Mr. Treece, sixty-five cents. No—for you, fifty cents. No . . . no. . . . A good customer like you. . . .

WHERE in the world did you ever find *her*? I inquire, leaning over to whisper to Onya.

Ach, is it not terrible? Onya whispers back. I felt so *sor*-reeee. . . .

A madwoman is silently washing dishes. I have never seen her before. It is late in the

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evening, but no one, not even Mrs. Healy, is in sight. I fully expect the madwoman to turn suddenly, brandish a knife, and kill the old ladies. Her hair is yellow, but at the top there is a torn patch where dirt or rags or God knows what is held together with a pin. Over her real eyebrows, which are thick, not plucked, are painted, in what seems like crayon, bright blue eyebrows leading up to the temples demoniacally, like huge insect feelers. They must be two fingers thick. She seems made up for some weird ballet. Her eyes are innocent. Her mouth is thin. She hums to herself.

She came this afternoon, asking for work, Onya continues in a whisper. I could not turn her away. She said she was hungry. Maybe she escaped from a crazy house . . . or a prison. . . .

The old women fear nothing. They take in cats, bums, whores. They can turn no one away. The madwoman seems happy to be working. She looks up at Onya, every now and then, with a completely dependent helplessness and love.

IT IS a sunny day. The heat is intense and the El, clattering by, seems louder than ever. Great, hairy flies buzz about the scraps on the counter, circling wildly in the air. Moths rush at the windowpanes and tremble, flattened against the glass glaring in the sun. From the rear, a huge electric fan keeps up a steady whirring sound that paralyzes the ears. Hermann is sitting outside, in his coat.

A man I have never seen before is at the counter. We are the only customers. He is eating lustily, with great swallows. He leans back and pats his stomach and belches.

And how iss your father? asks Onya, with her usual civility.

My old man? Great! Eighty-one years today.

Eighty-one years? Does he have someone with him?

Him? Naw. He lives alone. Don't want no help. Washes his own clothes, cooks. Strong as a horse.

The laconic man belches again. He has a rude, hearty, pocked face. He must be in his fifties. His hair is reddish gray. He is lean and strong, with no excess weight.

Ach, wails Zinka. Hermann. He's sixty-three and he goes tomorrow to hospital.

Hospital? Him? The old faker! What's *his* trouble? growls the man, unsympathetically.

Ah, his heart. . . . mourns Zinka.

His heart! The man grimaces with disgust. Listen—if you open my heart, you'll find it busted into about eighteen hundred pieces. Am I complaining?

Well. . . . says Zinka, noncommittally.

Aw, tell him to go out and work. He pays too much attention to himself. You got to forget yourself. His heart! he snorts.

He attacks a chocolate sundae with whipped cream and ground nuts.

We both leave, by accident, together. He stops outside, looking down at Hermann as if he were some sort of curious insect he had stopped to examine by his shoe. Hermann is about to offer me his usual salute. He sits, gray and panting.

Listen, says the man curtly to Hermann. What's this crap about your heart?

Hermann looks up and nods slightly, without a word.

LISTEN, says the man. You know what you need? You need to work. Stop pampering yourself! Get inside there, and clean the dishes! Mop up the floor! That'll cure your heart. . . .

Hermann turns red. Then he pales. He looks at me.

No . . . no. . . . he says in a weak voice, quivering all over.

Whaddaya mean, no? Listen, says the man. I worked all my life. I don't care what I do, so long as I'm busy and don't think about nuthin. I've shoveled snow and swept the streets. I'm worth plenty today.

Hermann's jaws and lips begin to work in agitation and I am afraid he is going to have a stroke right here.

I shall tell you, he begins in a small, quivering, hesitant voice, I shall tell you—I worked all my life—I shall tell you—I was

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banker—in Czechoslovakia—I worked—very hard—

Banker! snorts the man, growing more excited. So that's it! You're living in the past. You're eating your heart out because you were once a banker.

No, says Hermann, as strongly as he can. I have done everything—I have worked in this country—I had export business—Hermann, too, is growing excited, trembling all over.

Banker, export business! Why, growls his pursuer, you ought to be ashamed of yourself! You've got a little woman in there worried sick about you! Why don't you get up and help her? That'll fix your heart!

His tone is like that of a head scoutmaster, vainly trying to shame a small boy out of a fear of snakes on a scouting trip. Nothing is serious if you have manly courage, if you get up and take the bull by the horns, etc. The manly code—I am growing vastly irritated myself, yet I nod my head as if in agreement, trying to be conciliatory, to help Hermann see that, perhaps, his trouble is psychosomatic.

I shall tell you, says Hermann. Doctor—six years ago—he say to me—Mr. Berg—you stop working now—you heart iss—bad—I cannot work—it iss not pleasure—I am vairy sick—

Listen, snarls the man, by now thoroughly disgusted with the admission of weakness, the loss of the manly code. Listen, it's all up here, everything.

He indicates his temple with his index finger.

You're as strong as I am, he says sourly. The trouble with you is you're proud. You worry about not being a banker again. Why, I don't care if I shovel crap in the gutter. You got to live. Quit complaining!

By this time, Hermann is tremendously agitated. I am sure he is going to have a stroke or a fit or something. He looks away from the man, working his face terribly. His body quivers. The moths, still pressed against the burning glass, shudder. The El roars by and drowns out the man's words, which are all about how he picks up drunks off the street and buys them a meal. By now, the conversation has grown purely autobiographical, and the man is going on, irrationally, about his own life. He seems affronted by Hermann's having been a banker.

Hermann looks at him again.

You don't know—he says, waving a hand with a gesture of curt dismissal. How should you know? You are not—Jewish. . . . We had to run—from Czechoslovakia—from Hitler—how shall I tell you—?

Hitler! the man shouts, furious. Hitler's *dead.* Forget all that! Did he bother *you?* You're alive and he's dead, that's all. You're living in the past. This is Third Avenue, not Germany!

But Hermann refuses to continue and stares intently down the street, ignoring his tormenter who, thoroughly annoyed, makes an impatient gesture and disappears. Immediately, Hermann seizes my bare arm, where the sleeve is rolled up, in his trembling hand.

Who — iss — this — man? he demands, hoarsely.

I don't know, Mr. Berg.

I never see this man—before. What right—has he—?

He pauses, unable to go on. A weight of suffering seems even heavier than I have noticed before in his face. He looks like a dying man about to confess.

Mr. Treece, he says in his slow, invalid way, you are—freynd—I can tell you—I cannot talk—to strangers—it iss not my habit—how shall they understand—?

I am thoroughly frightened and sure he is about to die, and I hesitate between going into the restaurant for help and staying here and listening to his confession.

I shall tell you—that we had—very much money—in Germany—in Czechoslovakia—we were lawyers and—bankers—I had biggest bank in Prague—I lost everything—everything—

I shift my feet.

But you must live in the present, not the past, I say helpfully. He doesn't listen.

All my life—I work hard—I have good

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business—this man does not—know—how shall he tell me? Now I cannot work—doctor—he say—Mr. Berg—you are sick—you must stop—work—

The old man is repetitious. He goes on and on, telling me about the bank, the export business, the doctor, the operation he is going to have tomorrow. It is all painful to hear and the drops of sweat are rolling down my face and finally I want to leave, but he clutches my arm in a grip strong enough for a man in his condition and I have to stay and hear him out. Over and over. His smothered anger and terrible fear have no outlet. There is no end to it. He is, indeed, washed up.

WHAT is that you are humming, Mr. Treece? *Die Dreigroschenoper,* it sounds.

Right, Onya. *Erst kommt das Fressen, dann kommt die Moral.*

Oh, that's right. You speak beautifully German. We saw it in Vienna. Ah, Lotte Lenya was so wonderful!

Wunderbar!

Erst kommt das Fressen. . . . Also, what will you have tonight?

THERE WILL BE A RECKONING

JOHN KING-FARLOW

GOD made brown, brown downs
Down by the sea,
A land of milk and honey,
Fit for Israel.
They stood
Long, long, before we did,
Or fought, or spat
On His creation.
Then rabbits must have run,
In safety
From man,
Though no doubt some wild wolf
Must have slavered their blood.

"What makes grass green?"
The learned professor
Asked the startled child,
Who looked to the hills for salvation
And found it:
"What makes it brown?"

Great funnels strew their filth
Over sky
And some who stoke their fires
Believe
That God made sky.
Mechanics—
"Any more fares, please, I thang 'oo."
A bell rang
And the monster started
on its course.

A man stood almost in its way.
It made him leap with fright
And curse the monster.
The monster's pilot cursed him too.
There will be a reckoning.

JOHN KING-FARLOW is an English poet (of half-American parentage) now entering his second year at Oxford.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

THE DISAPPEARING SMALL-TOWN JEW

Report on a Dwindling Tribe

LEE J. LEVINGER

ABOUT twenty years ago I attended a family reunion of a group of my father's cousins in a little town in the Middle West where I had lived as a child. The sons of a large family had come back from their widely scattered homes: Sam from his farm in Nebraska, Ludwig from the Black Hills, William from his clothing store in a small Iowa city. Even Frank had turned up, all the way from Texas, wearing a ten-gallon hat and wielding a cigarette-holder almost a foot long.

In the whole *mishpocha,* the only Jewish wife, besides my own, was Emil's—he kept a delicatessen store in St. Louis. The children of these mixed marriages were Lutherans, Methodists, Christian Scientists, according to the churches of their mothers. Frank from Texas boasted that his son, brought up by a pious Catholic mother, resembled him in appearance, and was nicknamed "the little Jew"; Frank also told us that he subscribed to an anti-Catholic paper just in order to read it ostentatiously whenever the priest came to visit.

Only one branch of the family was not represented, but I was able to add to the many tales I had previously heard of Fred Levinger, born Fritz. He had come from Germany in the 1890's, and in the little Kansas town where he settled had certainly been the only Jew. In the course of years he married, reared a family, joined the Episcopal church, became a successful merchant, and then the village banker and main financial power of the community. Though he retained his Jewish name, his relatives asserted that he crossed the street to avoid coming face to face with them when he visited their town. Later, the depression closed his bank, and he ended a lifetime of successful assimilation by suicide.

Is this a gloomy advance token of the fate of most of America's small-town Jews?

According to Linfield's census of American Jews in 1937, there were then about 9,800 communities of a hundred Jews or less, containing all told some 150,000 Jewish persons. In the course of the past fifty years I have encountered many such small clusters, ranging from two to thirty families, in such places as Dover, Delaware; Mitchell,

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FROM the Jewish communities of America's small towns there have come some of the outstanding leaders in both American and Jewish life. Is this reservoir, with the slow passage of the years, being dried up by a process of assimilation? LEE J. LEVINGER, who here describes the situation of the small-town American Jew today, speaks from first-hand knowledge. Born in Burke, Idaho, in 1890, he was ordained a rabbi in 1914. From 1914 to 1918 he was rabbi at Temple Israel in Paducah, Kentucky, leaving that post to become a chaplain in the U. S. Army. Subsequently, he led congregations in Evansville, Indiana, and Wilmington, Delaware. He has also, in the course of a long and varied career, been a lecturer in philosophy at Ohio State University, director of the research bureau of the Hillel Foundation, and representative of the Jewish Welfare Board to the USO during the last war. At present he is a chaplain at the Veterans Hospital in Palo Alto, California. He is the author of *History of the Jews in the United States* (1930) and *Anti-Semitism Today and Tomorrow* (1936).

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South Dakota; Walla Walla, Washington; Cairo, Illinois; and San Luis Obispo, California. They present a distinct situation among American Jews, vastly different from that of the larger group with its organized community, and different too from the situation of Jewish farmers who live on isolated farms like most American farmers.

Regardless of where the tiny community is located, certain common problems arise; and perhaps we may legitimately add to the range of Jewish types found in this country "The Small-Town Jew." His past is generally colorful; his present often shows as successful an integration in American life as is to be found anywhere; but his future raises some troubling questions.

A FEW scattered Jews came with the early pioneers in every section of the country. The first Jews landed in New Amsterdam almost three hundred years ago when it was a village. Judah Touro settled in New Orleans when it was still French territory; Lazarus Straus, the father of the Straus family, got his start in Talbotton, Georgia; Cyrus Adler first saw the light of day in Van Buren, Arkansas. Jews came to San Francisco with the forty-niners, and within a single year established two rival congregations.

My wife's grandparents came to Illinois in a covered wagon as part of German Jewish migration before the Civil War. Her grandfather passed up the opportunity to buy an acre on State Street in Chicago (most of that generation seem to have missed similar chances) and settled in the tiny town of Mendota, Illinois. His boom years came during the Civil War, when the passing soldiers were eager customers. But there he remained for the rest of his life, tending his store and bringing up his children.

I happen to be a native of the mining village of Burke, Idaho, where my father settled when it was still frontier; my mother, coming from civilized Munich, rode into town in one of the first boxcars of the new railroad. In Burke my father was storekeeper, justice of the peace, and postmaster; the only other places of business were saloons. He soon acquired the reputation of being the only man in town who never carried a gun, and hence was one of the few men who ran no danger of a gun fight or holdup. When my father's health made it necessary for the family to move to the prairie country, he settled in another village—Mitchell, South Dakota—and opened another store.

To Americans the country over, "Jew" is almost everywhere synonymous with "merchant." Certainly the small-town Jews of my boyhood were merchants almost to a man, although some of them had begun as peddlers only a few years before. By now almost all the peddlers, including the most recent immigrants, have promoted themselves to storekeepers, on however small a scale. They sell clothing, furniture, or groceries; if there is a department store in the village, it is usually Jewish-owned. In more recent years many Jews have opened specialty shops in small communities, often with the owner's wife as head saleswoman. Other Jews have made fortunes in the junk business. When he begins to ship in carload lots the junk peddler becomes a scrap-iron dealer and is accepted socially. Originally it was the German Jews who were the small-town merchants—and the junk dealers—but by now East European Jews are in the same businesses.

Recently we have begun to see Jewish professional men who avoid the overcrowded cities and practice in small towns instead. Some of these are European refugees, others young graduates of medical or dental schools. They seem to be uniformly successful, which is more than can be said of their big-city colleagues, but their total number is still very small. In certain parts of the South, the small-town Jews are coming to include manufacturers, since many small factories have been running away from the unions up North (only to meet the organizing drives of the same unions in their new locations).

Jewish workers and artisans of the kind found in New York simply do not exist in the small town—probably the villagers, Jews and Christians alike, would deny their existence anywhere. Certainly the villagers would refuse to believe there are really Jewish poor: the few Jewish beggars they meet travel from one large city to another, and pay the village a visit only if it hap-

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pens to be located on the main railway line.

For some years it seemed that small-town merchants, both Jews and Gentiles, would have to give way before the great retail chains, but somehow they have held their own and even achieved a new prosperity. Some of them have branched out into small chains of their own, spreading across the prairies. It is hard to say how much of this survival is due to the spirit of the small town, which is loyal to its own; how much to the skill with which the Jewish merchant identifies himself with his community. In a California town they still tell the story of the aged merchant, now dead, whose department store was a not-so-gay relic of the gay 90's, with a forbidding battered facade and miscellaneous heaps of merchandise "to satisfy every human need." A friend once asked him why he did not improve the appearance of his store in line with others on the block; he pointed to three country families who were just then shopping for the fall and winter, and said: "Those people have shopped here for two generations; if they saw a new front they'd say 'My money built that place,' and they'd never come back."

PEOPLE in small towns, we all know, behave differently from those in the great cities. They meet each other face to face; they know each other by their first names. They are friendly, not necessarily because they possess more virtue, but because in such small groups it is hardly possible not to be. They harbor little anti-Semitism, though there is always a remnant of religious prejudice, often fostered by the churches—and the churches have far more influence there than in the city. They are willing, even eager, to accept the Jew as one of their own if he fits into their pattern. They need him in both business and social life—the group is too small to dispense with any potentially useful member.

Of course, the Jew himself must be ready to go a little more than halfway, and most small-town Jews are. He finds it easier if he has been born and bred in a small town himself, but he can come from the city and quite easily establish himself as a member of the small community if he is friendly and willing to take part in civic life. The prime factor here is the absence of a Jewish social group. When there are only a very few Jewish families, the individual Jew finds his social life largely among congenial Christian neighbors. On the other hand, when Gentiles meet no compact body of Jews they are left free to reject or welcome each individual on his own personal merit.

The Jewish merchant becomes a member of the American Legion, the Rotary Club, the Masons, the Elks. He does not join the Presbyterian church, but he contributes to its annual bazaar. His wife holds an office in the Eastern Star; his son plays football at high school or golf at the country club. Sometimes he buys a farm or becomes a director of the local bank. The situation seems made to order as a background for complete assimilation.

THIS process has gone furthest in the South, where many Jewish families trace their origins back before the Civil War. There being few recent immigrants to dilute the tradition of the "old family," a Jewish body as large as fifty families in a Southern town will generally be much more closely integrated in the life of the whole community than a group of the same size in the North. And in a Southern town, where the Negro problem dominates every other, anti-Semitism is apt to be of little importance. Even the Klan in most communities never actually distinguished Southern Jews as an element apart from the community or disturbed their comfortable, middle-class life.

This ease, far from Zion, was not always the norm, for Jewish pioneers must have stood out painfully both as foreigners and as Jews in the fairly homogeneous communities of the earlier days. Isaac M. Wise tells in his reminiscences how a Quaker couple from Kentucky traveled many miles to see him in his early years in Cincinnati, during the middle of the last century. After a thorough inspection of the slight young rabbi, the woman concluded, with disappointed air: "Why, thee art no different to other folk!" Mark Twain, speaking of his Jewish schoolmates in Hannibal, Missouri, tells of his awe at knowing people who seemed to have stepped directly out of the Old Testament.

The small-town Jews generally lived down

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this initial exoticism before too long. My wife's grandmother was a famous baker of cakes, and was always asked to contribute one of her masterpieces when one of the Mendota churches gave a supper. My mother served for some years as treasurer of the Women's Club in her town, and complained mildly: "Why do they always make the Jewish representative the treasurer? I'm not really good at figures, and I'd be much better as a committee chairman." In one of Irvin Cobb's stories of Paducah, Kentucky, he has the Jewish clothing merchant's cook bring a dish of *gefilte* fish every Friday to the Catholic priest, who appreciated equally the compliment and the cooking.

Sometimes the Jewish merchant becomes the leading figure of his town. I am thinking of Will Schlossberg, who died a few years ago, honored and mourned by an entire community in Texas. He was born in the North but married a native of the town, daughter of an early Jewish pioneer. He established a department store, acquired considerable farm property, and became a director of the local bank. In time, he was made a trustee of the local Methodist college and of the Catholic hospital. When the depression closed every bank within a hundred miles, Will put his entire fortune at the disposal of the local bank and gave all his time to restoring its resources, thus saving both businessmen and farmers. During the bad years he tore up many a farm mortgage rather than drive a hard-working family off their land. Three of his four children married Jews from outside the village, while a fourth married a Christian classmate.

Will's life, while hardly typical, shows what the Jew can accomplish in the small town. When a Jew enters politics there, his success or failure seems to be purely a personal matter. I know one town in California where a Jew was mayor for eighteen years, and according to local legend refused to draw any salary during that entire period. It was in the Far West, where the Jewish vote was negligible, that the first four Jewish governors of states were elected to office. Moses Alexander of Boise, Idaho, and Simon Bamberger of Salt Lake City, Utah, both German immigrants, were elected governors of their respective states during the First World War; Governors Julius L. Meier of Portland, Oregon, and Arthur Seligman of Albuquerque, New Mexico, were elected in 1930. All were merchants—three of the four in small cities (though not small towns), and all were leaders in non-Jewish communities.

For all his acceptance, the small-town Jew seldom gets beyond feeling that he should be most careful to avoid anything that might make him conspicuous or expose him to criticism. The Cohens may try to keep up with the Joneses but they also try equally not to get ahead of them. They never build a bigger house or buy a more expensive car than their neighbors, even if they can afford it. Their parties conform to the local standard, not only because they are part of the community themselves, but also for protective coloration.

But when we turn from this picture of Jewish acceptance to that of Jewish communal life in any proper sense, we find that it just does not exist. The Jews do not form a social group as in the larger city. They may meet together occasionally for special purposes, but most of their social life is with Gentiles. Children play with their classmates; adults visit their neighbors.

Most towns have no organized Jewish activities whatever, not even a congregation. Even the 260 organized communities of less than one hundred Jews that Linfield lists present no rich or lively picture. There is not enough money for a rabbi, not enough children for a well-organized religious school, not enough adults to carry on much interesting or useful activity. It is sometimes pathetic to watch the few interested persons trying month by month to keep up their B'nai B'rith meetings or their Council of Jewish Women. Ordinarily one organization must serve all purposes, including local relief and the appeals for aid to Israel. A half-dozen people pass the offices around among themselves, and are grateful if a newcomer is willing to try his hand at one of them.

Where the community may be big enough to support a minuscule congregation (which perforce includes all wings of practice and belief), it is hardly ever large enough to support a rabbi. Occasionally a devoted Jew-

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ish woman organizes a Sunday school, usually in her own home. With a half-dozen children of all ages, one or two untrained volunteers as teachers, and a few haphazard and out-of-date volumes as both texts and reference, it is rare that they are able to do much more than provide a bare alternative to the Christian Sunday school the children might otherwise attend with their friends. I have been told of one small-town matriarch of a generation ago who became alarmed at the frequency with which her three children attended the Methodist Sunday school. So, deciding to begin their Jewish education without further ado, she bundled them up the next Saturday afternoon for a trip to the city, sixty miles away. But the next morning, when the family appeared bright and early—and unannounced—at the temple, the furnace was out of order and school was suspended for the day. Since her enthusiasm was never again up to the effort, the Jewish education of her three children ended before it began.

The small-town Jew is amazingly ignorant of the most elementary matters—even the dates of the holidays. One person may remember the customs in the European town of his origin, another those in a certain American city from which he came, but in both cases the information is scrappy and unreliable. As for those who were born and raised in the town, they do not even have memories.

Of course some small towns are near enough to big cities to be practically part of them, and more are becoming so with the spread of suburbs. I have known families who drove a hundred miles or more every Sunday, especially in confirmation year, to bring their children to a religious school. But only the most interested take the matter so seriously; the majority drop away.

THE greatest worry of the small-town Jew is intermarriage, against which parents are constantly waging a losing struggle. They see their boys and girls growing up among Gentiles. All their friends are non-Jews: whom shall they marry? "What shall I do," protested one despairing father, "import a son-in-law?"

But that is exactly what many parents try to do. Their daughter is sent to the city or a summer resort, or even to college, in the hope that she will meet "a nice Jewish boy" willing to enter an established business. Sometimes her success is all too complete and the boy turns out to be Orthodox, creating difficulties for the family and the village. Sons are less manageable, so it is often pure luck, for the family, if the co-ed the son brings home turns out to be Jewish. But Jewish or Gentile, they accept her; the days of "sitting *shiva*" for the child who has intermarried have long since disappeared.

In one Southern town the president of the congregation had a Christian wife. In a California town, when the Jewish Welfare Board called for workers to entertain Jewish soldiers, it turned out that the outstanding makers of *gefilte* fish and *blintzes* were two women with Gentile husbands; they could be counted on for heroic efforts all year except on Christmas, when they had to conduct their own family celebrations.

I have even been told of one town in the Northwest where the six Jewish families who were entertaining soldiers were surprised to find themselves joined by a volunteer with a distinctly Irish name. While the other women had forgotten the Jewish dishes of their childhood, she turned out to have the best Jewish kitchen training of them all. Rumor had it that the lady had at one time kept a "disorderly house"; but for the duration she served their committee and was even admitted into respectable Jewish homes for committee meetings.

Most of the children of these intermarriages tend to drift into the majority group. Sometimes one is surprised to find a Jewish name surviving in a family long Christian, such as that of Matt Cohen, who some years ago was secretary of agriculture of the State of Kentucky.

OF COURSE in our highly mobile American society, even the most isolated group does not easily disappear from the body of American Jewry. Many families have come from larger cities within the past few years, introducing some additional vitality to small-town life. Then, people constantly drift back to the larger towns for family reunions, for "fishing expeditions" for the young people, even for specific Jewish contacts. The cemetery, the annual Rosh Hashanah and Yom

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Kippur services, the Kaddish, bring many isolated Jews periodically to the nearest Jewish community. The merchants combine their buying trips to New York, Chicago, or Kansas City with the renewal of family and congregational ties. Sometimes one will even sell out and move to the city to give his children a Jewish environment, but few indeed can afford to do this until their families have grown up. Young people are constantly leaving the small town for the city, in consonance with one of the established patterns of American life, and these small-town Jews may then be reabsorbed by the body of organized Jewry.

Several national Jewish organizations have recently taken cognizance of the situation, and have planned means to deal with it. The Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the United Synagogue have an organization of regional rabbis who seek out Jews in the small towns and the colleges in several states. But they can give little time to any single group, and can aid only those that have sufficient numbers and potential leaders. The Jewish Welfare Board also has experimented with community-center activities for groups of small communities in the same areas. But vast distances and small numbers doom most of these efforts from the outset; the spaciousness of American geography is a stubborn opponent.

In recent years, world Jewish movements have reached into every village in America, but their influence has often been curiously weak. Every Jew was upset by the Nazi persecutions, but not every Jew took the matter personally. Even in the big cities there were cases of merchants who gave generously to relief funds, but refused to boycott German goods on the ground that business was one thing and charity another. No wonder many a small-town dweller, secure in his community, felt untouched by the world storm until America entered the war and his own son was called to service. His response was almost entirely the same as that of his neighbors, with only a touch of *Judenschmerz*.

Zionism awakened hardly an echo in the small American town. These Jews were the most intensely local, the least aware of Jewish ties, of all American Jewry. Their way of life being one of assimilation, most of them had probably come to think of Palestine simply as the Holy Land, as the Presbyterian or Congregational pastor had spoken of it in some public address. But the State of Israel has had a sizable impact. The very people who shuddered to see the name of Jew emblazoned in the headlines day after day, were proud to see it voiced, not in pity, but in praise. A Jewish government, a Jewish army, a successful war, a government loan—these have finally penetrated the consciousness of many who seemed dulled to all Jewish appeals. Some are already buying Israel bonds, on the authority of the Vice-President of the United States.

Because of their proximity to army camps, scores of small communities in the South and Far West experienced a real revival of Judaism during the Second World War. The Jewish Welfare Board supplied a worker affiliated with the USO who reached out to the thousands of Jewish boys from the big cities. At the same time, he organized the local Jews who, after the initial shock, learned to like these seemingly uncouth Jewish boys from the East. The soldiers, on their part, learned to be tolerant of the provincialism and heathenism about them. The local women prepared a lunch for the Oneg Sabbath, cooked a Seder meal for hundreds of strangers from the East, and finally opened their homes and received the newcomers as friends.

How could they have avoided learning a little about Judaism? Many an adult Jew saw his first Seder in a USO club, led by an army chaplain. Sometimes the local community objected to serving kosher food, not only because of the inconvenience, but simply because they found it superfluous, and their neighbors might consider it queer. Only continued contact with the Jewish soldiers made them realize how many came from Orthodox homes, and that every element of the ritual was essential if the Seder was really to suit them. Many a tiny community attended its first Jewish service in an army chapel. Some even organized religious schools under the leadership of a chaplain or welfare worker. Certainly some after-effect must remain of these years of Jewish unity, Jewish worship, Jewish activity. But the small town also remains a small town and its resources have not increased.

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A continuing influence has been the United Jewish Appeal, which with its constant expansion has finally reached out to every hamlet where Jews may be found. In a little town like Yankton, South Dakota, the eight Jewish families raised five thousand dollars in one year, including a few contributions from non-Jews. But the UJA comes only once a year. It has awakened village Jews in surprising measure, but when the need for funds shrinks to a few millions a year, the leaders may find that the canvassing of small places costs more than it is worth, and little or nothing will have been left behind.

For how many generations can this process continue and the people remain Jews? I know one family in the Middle West now in their third generation of small-town life, several in the South now in the fourth. But little by little they are losing touch.

Many old Jewish communities in this country have died out altogether. Newport, Rhode Island, had a flourishing congregation of Spanish Jews that was scattered by the Revolutionary War. Its historic synagogue, now a national shrine, was unused for a century, and now a congregation of Ashkenazic Jews worship in the synagogue of the Sephardim. (Wilmington, Delaware, had a congregation of German Jews at the time of the Civil War: today the old families have been completely replaced by later immigrants from Eastern Europe.)

I know a little town in California that has a Jewish cemetery as the sole reminder of a once flourishing community. All the old families have died out or moved away except one, an old man and his sister who were born there and still live in their rambling old family home near the river. Old Mr. Jonas is the village department store owner and the local philanthropist. He is a good citizen, but he has no Jewish contacts or interests. Neither the High Holiday services nor the United Jewish Appeal found any response in him or his sister. Once I thought I found a tiny crack in his shell. I was sitting beside the rolltop desk in his old-fashioned office, facing the little old man. We discussed the USO, in which he was as interested as any other good citizen, and I mentioned the need of a Torah for Jewish services. "A Torah?" he asked. "A Scroll of the Law," I explained, "such as every synagogue requires." "We used to have one in the old days," he remarked. "I suppose it's packed away in the basement of the store." Whether through indolence, indifference, or actual hostility to the idea, the old man never found it.

So the village Jews disappear before our eyes. Their only chance for survival lies in the growth of their town, in its transformation into a suburb by the spread of a metropolitan area. Towns formerly independent have become part of the big-city area, their old inhabitants swamped by the commuters. In such cases, there may be some Jews among the newcomers, as well as among the new businessmen attracted by the growing community. Then we see the rapid growth, not of one but of two or three congregations, not of one lodge or society but of eight or ten at once. The growing town almost overnight reproduces the complex structure and the conflicting movements of a great Jewish community. But then the town is no longer a village, and its Jews are no longer village Jews.

Thus as time passes, it seems that we shall soon have to write off most of the 150,000 village Jews from the roster of American Jewry. True, they are but 3 per cent of our total number. But they have included many of our boldest and most admirable spirits, and we can hardly be indifferent to their loss.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

REB MOSES MONTEFIORE AND THE CRIMEAN WAR

Two Tales of a Jewish Culture-Hero

S. AN-SKY

S. An-sky was the pseudonym of the Russian and Yiddish writer Solomon Zanvil Rappoport, best known as author of the play *The Dybbuk*. An-sky was born in Vitebsk, in White Russia, in 1863, and received an Orthodox Jewish education. Like so many others, he broke with his background and became a revolutionary at an early age, and went to live and work among the peasants. He began to write in Russian and published several novels of village life; but under the influence of Chaim Zhitlowsky, the philosopher who throughout his life urged the possibility of a Jewish secular culture in the Yiddish language, he turned to Yiddish.

An-sky took part in the revolution of 1905, and after its failure he threw himself into the study of Jewish folklore and collected great numbers of folk stories, songs, and legends. He wrote *The Dybbuk* just before the outbreak of the First World War. After the revolution of 1917, he was elected to the Constituent Assembly; but when the Bolsheviks seized power An-sky found Russia increasingly uncongenial and went to Warsaw, where he died in 1917.

The two tales here reprinted were translated from the Yiddish by Joseph Leftwich and published in his anthology, *Yisroel: The First Jewish Omnibus* (London, 1933). They are reprinted here with his permission.—Ed.

FAR, far away, across the sea, in England, lived Reb Moses Montefiore. He was a great man in Israel, and his name was famous from one end of the world to the other. He was the chief adviser of the British Queen, and she would not take a step without consulting him. The greatest princes and lords bowed down before him. Even the kings of foreign countries showed Reb Moses Montefiore great honor.

His wealth was beyond compute. He owned many wells of quicksilver, and though full vessels were drawn up day and night, the wells never ran dry. And quicksilver, as everyone knows, is more expensive than ordinary silver, some say even more expensive than gold. That will give an idea how wealthy he was! He lived in the Royal Palace, which was ornamented with gold and silver and precious stones and pearls. He had hundreds of servants, and when he traveled it was only in a golden coach, drawn by eight horses, and before him sped runners, crying "Way there for our Lord Montefiore!"

But it was not his power nor his wealth that made Reb Moses Montefiore famous all over the world. It was all because of his noble deeds, because of what he did for Israel. If ever a misfortune came upon Jews, it might be at the very ends of the earth, if there was a pogrom, a libel, an expulsion, or whatsoever civil edict, he rose up at once like a lion to defend his brothers. He rushed to the Queen, threw himself on his knees before her, and asked for aid. He traveled to the kings of foreign lands, spent gold lavishly, and would not rest till the edict was annulled.

At the same time he was very generous with his money. He built schools and yeshivas, maintained thousands of Jews who sat studying the sacred tomes, helped the poor, supported the fallen, was a father to the widows and the orphans. And he was also a really pious Jew, and scrupulously observed all the commandments.

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But since it is impossible in this world for any man to be without fault, Reb Moses Montefiore lacked something—he lacked learning.

He was no ignoramus, God forbid! On the contrary, he knew his Gemara, studied a complete section every day, and he wasn't content just with studying the Gemara, but he studied it together with the Tosefta and Maharasha as it ought to be done. But his learning lacked depth, acuteness, fire. And he grieved because of this.

AT THE same time that the name of Reb Moses Montefiore was famous all over the world, there lived in the town of Minsk, in Lithuania, the Gaon Rabbi Gershon Tanchum. He, too, was a great man in Israel, and his fame was world-wide. He knew the whole of Sha'as by heart. There was no volume of Jewish learning that he had not studied. There was no Halacha to which he had not contributed something new. In him were wells full of the quicksilver of wisdom, and no matter how much he drew upon them, they were always brimful. He, too, built great palaces of invention and ingenuity, and walked at ease among the orchards and the vineyards of the glorious Haggada. And he spent his spiritual treasures with a lavish hand. He gave food and drink to those who hungered and thirsted for the word of God.

But Rabbi Gershon Ben Tanchum also lacked something. With all his wisdom and greatness he was terribly poor. His pay as a rabbi was two gulden a week, and since he had a big family, he suffered hunger and privation.

And there came a day when the fame of Reb Gershon Ben Tanchum reached the ears of Reb Moses Montefiore. And Reb Moses Montefiore decided to have him as his teacher. And when Reb Moses Montefiore decides to have something, it is, naturally, not a difficult matter for him to have it. So he didn't take long to make up his mind, and ordered eight horses to be harnessed to his gold coach, and he went off to Minsk. And on his way, as was his wont, he threw heaps of rubles out of the windows on both sides of the road. He did not even look to see who picked it up, a Jew or a non-Jew—it was all one to him!

Now you must realize that it is ever so far from England to Minsk. But what does that matter if you travel with eight spanking steeds! A few days pass and Reb Moses Montefiore is in Minsk. He stops in the middle of the market place, and asks where Reb Gershon Tanchum lives. So they point out to him a little old house in a side street behind the synagogue. And Reb Moses Montefiore goes along there, walks into the room, and finds Reb Gershon poring over a tome. So Reb Moses Montefiore goes up to him and says: "Rabbi, I want you to know that I am Moses Montefiore."

When Rabbi Gershon heard these words, he stood up quickly, repeated the blessing on seeing great men, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Who hast given of Thy wisdom to flesh and blood," and greeted his visitor.

Reb Moses Montefiore responded to his greeting, and said: "I want you to know, Rabbi Gershon Tanchum, that I have decided to have you as my teacher. I shall give your family as much as they require for their needs, and you will come away with me. You will live with me in the Palace, will sit at my table, and take from my hand for everything you must have—for clothing and shoes, for a bath, and a pinch of snuff."

Robbi Gershon Tanchum hears these words and does not know what to reply. Here Reb Moses Montefiore has come to fetch him in a gold coach, so how can he refuse him? Yet he replies that he must first consult his wife and obtain permission from his congregation. And when he has done this, Reb Moses Montefiore counts out a thousand rubles in gold coins for his family, seats Reb Tanchum at his side in the gold coach, and off they go in an auspicious hour.

WHEN they arrive in England, Reb Moses Montefiore conducts Rabbi Gershon Tanchum first of all over his estates. He shows him his wells of quicksilver, his towns and villages, fields and woods, orchards and vineyards, and he says to him: "Rabbi, look! Everything you see around you is mine, and more also!"

Rabbi Gershon Tanchum looks and marvels. It has never entered his mind that it is possible for any one man to have so many possessions.

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Then Reb Moses Montefiore takes him into the Palace and leads him through all the rooms. Each room more beautiful than the one before, and all ornamented with gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, and hung with costly tapestries. Rabbi Gershon Tanchum looks and marvels. He has never seen so many beautiful things, not even in his dreams.

Then Reb Moses Montefiore takes him into the largest chamber of all, and it is all lighted up with diamonds and brilliants, and on the ceiling are painted the sun and moon and all the signs of the zodiac, and they revolve in keeping with the time, and along the whole length of the chamber are tables of silver covered with cloth of gold. And the finest viands are on the tables, and there are crystal flasks filled with the rarest wines. And at the tables are seated on one side the princes, earls, and lords of England, and on the other the wealthiest and finest Jews of the British Empire. And there are scores of servants attending to their wants. And as soon as Reb Moses Montefiore enters they all jump up from their seats, bow low before him, and cry with one voice: "Long live our lord, Reb Moses Montefiore."

When Rabbi Gershon Tanchum sees what great honor is being paid to Reb Moses Montefiore, he starts shaking all over, and when the servants hand him the finest food, he is unable to lift up his spoon, because he is all atremble, awed and terrified by the riches, greatness, and honor of Reb Moses Montefiore.

After they had eaten, when the princes, earls, and lords had left, Reb Moses Montefiore rose in his place, and said: "And now, Rabbi Gershon Tanchum will expound to us the Torah." Rabbi Gershon Tanchum wanted to expound the Torah, but he could not open his mouth for fear. Reb Moses Montefiore reiterated his command: "Rabbi Gershon Tanchum will expound the Torah."

So Rabbi Gershon Tanchum pulled himself together, and began quietly, with a quivering voice, to expound the Torah. And Reb Moses Montefiore listened. And the more he heard, the more amazed he was at his immense learning.

And Rabbi Gershon Tanchum pulled himself together again, and suddenly he forgot all about Reb Moses Montefiore's estates. The wells of quicksilver, the fields and woods, the orchards and vineyards all vanished out of his mind, his voice ceased to quiver, and he penetrated into the depths of the great forests of Halacha. And Reb Moses Montefiore listened and was amazed at the immensity of his wisdom.

And Rabbi Gershon Tanchum pulled himself together again. He forgot the Palace with its ornamented chambers, he forgot the costly food, the princes and the earls, and the honors that were paid to Reb Moses Montefiore. And his voice grew firm and loud, and he soared at ease over the Garden of Eden of the Haggada. And Reb Moses Montefiore was listening now with fear.

And when Rabbi Gershon Tanchum entirely divested himself of the outside world, he rose to the highest peaks of the Torah and descended to its utmost depths, and his face was aflame, and his voice thundered. And Reb Moses Montefiore was seized with terror, and could not remain seated where he was, and he was all atremble, hand and foot.

II

When the Queen of England had only just ascended the throne, and the coronation had not yet taken place, she arranged a big banquet, and asked to it all the kings and princes throughout the world, in order to get to know them. And she also invited all the great men of her own kingdom, dukes and ministers, and at the head of them all, of course, the chief of her advisers, Reb Moses Montefiore.

When they had all come together at the banquet, and the gathering had become somewhat elevated by reason of choice wines, the kings began to boast, each about his own kingdom. One boasted of the size of his land, another of the wealth of his, a third of the power of his, and the fourth of the wisdom of his.

And the Czar of Russia rose up, Nicholas I, and he said: "My country is the greatest in the world. My people is like the sand of the sea for numbers. And my wealth is beyond compute. There is only one trouble. There are a great many Jews in my king-

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dom, and I can't think how to get rid of them."

Reb Moses Montefiore heard this, and it displeased him. So he went up to Nicholas, and bowed low before him, and said: "My Lord King. I understand that you are dissatisfied because you have so many Jews in your kingdom. You can get rid of them very easily."

"How?" asked Nicholas.

"Very simply. Sell them to me. I shall pay you for every Jewish soul, aged or infant, man or woman, three rubles in cash."

"And you will take the Jews out of my land?"

"I shall not leave one behind."

The thought made Nicholas very happy. It would be a wonderful business. He would get rid of all the Jews, and he would have a fat sum of money in return. So he immediately assented, and it was arranged that in three months' time Montefiore would come to Russia, pay his money, and take away all the Jews.

WHEN he came back to Russia, Nicholas called all his Ministers and Senators and said to them: "I have done a splendid stroke of business. I have sold all our Jews at three rubles apiece, cash down."

When the Ministers and Senators heard this, they were seized with consternation and cried: "But Lord King! What have you done! We are now receiving from every Jew, man, woman, or child, an average of forty rubles a year. It will ruin us if you give them away for three."

Nicholas realized he had blundered. And he asked what could now be done.

And the Ministers and Senators began to think how to avoid giving up the Jews. Finally one Minister said: "My Lord King! I have thought of a plan how to keep the Jews here. A Jew is recognized by his long beard and earlocks and his long caftan. Decree that all Jews must cut off their beards and earlocks and wear short coats. And no one will be able to recognize that they are Jews. And when Montefiore comes, hand over to him the Karaites and tell him that there are no other Jews in your kingdom."

The plan pleased Nicholas and he decreed that all Jews must cut off beards and earlocks and wear short coats.

When Reb Moses Montefiore arrived in Petersburg at the time arranged, and went to the Czar's Palace with his contract, a Minister came out, and said: "We consider the Karaites as real Jews, and there are no other Jews in our Kingdom. If you wish, take the Karaites and pay according to their number."

Reb Moses Montefiore realized at once that they did not want to let the Jews go. And he became very angry, and went back home.

HE STOPPED for the Sabbath in Vilna. At that time Count Potocki was Governor of Vilna. And when he got to know that Reb Moses Montefiore had come, he went to welcome him.

Reb Moses Montefiore received him with great honor. As they sat there talking, a rider arrived from Petersburg and handed Reb Moses Montefiore a sealed letter from Petersburg. Reb Moses Montefiore took the letter, examined it, and put it down on the table.

Count Potocki was amazed.

"Why don't you open it?" he cried. "The respect due to royalty requires that the Czar's letter should be opened immediately."

To this Reb Moses Montefiore replied: "I cannot unseal the letter, because it is forbidden on the Sabbath."

So Count Potocki took the letter, and wanted to open it. But Reb Moses Montefiore stopped him, and he said: "You are a great lord, and you are, moreover, my guest. I cannot allow you to open my letters for me."

So Count Potocki called one of his servants and told him to open the letter, and as soon as the servant opened the letter he fell down dead, because the letter was poisoned.

When Reb Moses Montefiore saw that, he ordered his coach to be got ready, and he rode away on the Sabbath. When he came home, he flung himself on his knees before the Queen and told her all that had happened. The Queen was furious, and declared war on Nicholas.

That was how the Crimean War began.

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ON THE HORIZON

The Dialect Comedian Should Vanish

SAM LEVENSON

HENRY POPKIN, in his article "The Vanishing Jew of Our Popular Culture," in the July COMMENTARY, laments the fact that hypersensitive people in considerable numbers have protested so vehemently against Jewish dialect humor that as a result it has had to go into hiding. I say that it should stay there. Jewish humor and popular Jewish culture will not be the poorer for it. As a practicing humorist, I have come to the conclusion that to mimic broken English is as painful to the immigrant as mimicking a limp is to the cripple. There are even worse implications.

Mr. Popkin feels that by rejecting dialect we are "sha-sha-ing," Aryanizing, that we are dishonestly eliminating a section of Jewish humor which should be given free play. I admit that in my own work I have deliberately expurgated dialect stories. I'll tell you why, too. I was in the audience of a night club while a famous "dialectician" was regaling a predominantly Gentile audience with stories of shrewd Jewish businessmen, of fat and uncultured Jewish women in mink coats, stories of Jews who outwit Gentiles—and the audience howled. Their laughter frightened me. The entire scene recalled the Nazi beer hall where comedians with derby hats and beards told the same type of story to those who later were to become the executioners of our people. This may sound extreme, but it is my belief that any Jew who, in humor or otherwise, strengthens the misconceptions and the prejudices against his own people is neither a good Jew nor a responsible human being.

I myself stood before an audience of pretty hard-looking Westerners out in Las Vegas, Nevada. When the name Sam Levenson was announced, there was a hush. A Jewish comedian was coming on. I could have broken the ice immediately by going into dialect, but I remembered my father and I considered my child and I said "No." I told them stories about nice mothers, and doting grandmas, and kids with bad report cards who got hit, and daughters who were a problem because they would never get to be *balabustehs*. Now, I admit, Mr. Popkin, that I didn't say they were Jews. I admit I consciously omitted the word Jew from the entire discourse. I was afraid that if I said they were Jews the audience's prejudices might come into play and destroy the beautiful picture I had built up. Every story has a punch line—this one does, too. After it was all over an immense cowboy came backstage, gave me a wallop on the shoulder that almost floored me, and yelled: "Goddam, mah maw was just like that!" The moral of the story is that these people were bred on Potash and Perlmutter, Max Mefoofsky, Smith and Dale, Pierre Ginzburg, on such jewels of Jewish wit as "Did you hear? My brother is sick." "Is he?" "No, Ikey!"

NO ONE has a deeper sympathy for the struggles of the immigrant Jew with a new land and a new language than I do.

"ON THE HORIZON" this month we find a fairly straight-faced discussion by SAM LEVENSON of the evils of dialect humor, and a report by PETER GRADENWITZ on cultural activities in present-day Israel. Mr. Levenson—well, if you don't know who Sam Levenson is, maybe you haven't even heard of television, and how are we going to explain *that*? He is also, however, the author of a book, *Meet the Folks*, and a Yiddish newspaper once called him the American Sholom Aleichem, who was the Yiddish Mark Twain. Mr. Gradenwitz, a leading composer and music critic in Tel Aviv, is author of *The Music of Israel* and several other books on music.

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I was raised in that kind of family, but the classic vaudeville "dialecticians" did not tell the truth about my father's generation. If they had presented the whole picture, then perhaps there would have been room for some "dialectical" kidding, but when every Jew is presented as a pawnbroker or his next of kin, I say good riddance; I also would say good riddance to "Amos and Andy." I don't blame the Negroes for writing letters of protest to the networks.

The most powerful argument I can offer on this subject is another true story. I was vacationing in the country with my family when we came across a clambake held in the woods by a group from town known to be anti-Semites. We were in a rowboat at the time. I pulled up close to shore just to take a peek and found the group laughing like crazy, listening to a loud-speaker that was playing "Schlepperman" records.

Mr. Popkin mentions in passing "two Yiddish-American revues aimed at the Jewish market" as proof of the consoling fact that in spite of some supersensitive people there are those who are not afraid to present dialect on the stage. At least one of the two masterpieces of Yiddish theater, *Bagels and Yox,* was condemned bitterly by all of the Yiddish press as an abomination of Jewish culture. Even *Variety* felt that *Bagels and Yox* had set race relations back about forty years. The other opus, *Borscht Capades,* was milder, but still lacked any real sense of Jewish culture. Is it "misguided benevolence," as Mr. Popkin says, to hide these monstrosities from the view of the Christian world?

Now that I have said Kaddish for dialect, let me sweep my thumb through the air like a Talmudist and say "on the other hand"—on the other hand there is Molly Goldberg, who speaks with an accent yet teaches love, kindliness, honesty, respect for culture, and decency on a high level, as does "Mama" in Scandinavian dialect. Which brings me around to this—that dialect may be permissible if the subject matter, the content in itself does not discredit the Jew. Unfortunately most of the history of dialect humor proves that such has not been the case.

And I should also like to ask this question: Why revive dialect today? How many American Jews speak in dialect? Is dialect typical of the American Jew? It is dated at best.

Let's take another "on the other hand." If we were living in an ideal world, a completely enlightened and genuinely democratic world, we could unhesitatingly present Mefoofsky and Albert Einstein in the same play, but the world being the unbrotherly mess that it is, I feel that deliberately to force the scale somewhat in favor of Albert Einstein or Mr. Emmanuel or Aubrey Eban rather than on the side of Max Mefoofsky is not an "excess of discretion."

I AM now going to leave myself wide open for a good left from some robust Yiddishist with this one: There are such things as "inside jokes," comments, allusions, references, even self-deprecating slurs, which a people tolerates within its own ranks. These inside-isms are very common in Yiddish parlance, yet I would not use them in English before a Gentile audience, no matter how enlightened; simply because they have not been raised in the same family and cannot possibly have the complete and sympathetic understanding that derives from being born into and living with a people. For example: In Sholom Aleichem's *The Old Country* (published by Crown), the author says on page 138: ". . . a Jew is not a thief by nature, that is, he may be a thief, but not the sort who will climb through a window or attack you with a knife. He will divert, pervert, subvert and contravert as a matter of course; but he won't pull anything out of your pocket."

I say frankly that I would have deleted these lines if I were the editor. I know the real and kindly meaning of these lines, but if I can pull them out of context as I have just done, can you imagine what could be done with them by an anti-Semite? I don't believe in "between me and you" jokes. Between me and you I think we are a magnificent people and I prefer to talk about ourselves that way.

Now, dialect being somewhat of a hybrid between Yiddish intonation and bad English, comedians sometimes slip into the error of thinking they are talking "inside," but are actually shouting outside, where people are not loving, just laughing.

I know that interfaith propaganda has not

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proven itself to be as effective an instrument for combating prejudice as we all hoped it would be. Still there are indications here and there which are encouraging. In the preparation of my television material I have operated under an interfaith philosophy. I have tried to make my mother typical, not only typical of the Jewish mother, but the prototype of the universal mother. Whether I have succeeded will be proven by time, but I have a story to tell.

LAST summer my wife, my son Conrad, and I were standing before Plymouth Rock. As I was telling my boy the story of the *Mayflower,* comparing it with the S. S. *Cedric* which brought his grandparents to America, pointing out the similarity of the dreams and ambitions that brought the Pilgrims and later the Jews to America, I felt a tap on my shoulder. A stately, gray-haired gentleman timidly asked me:

"Are you Mr. Livingston from television?"

"Yes."

"Would you do me a favor?"

"Certainly."

"Come home with me, just for a few minutes, I want you to meet my wife."

Out of sheer curiosity I got into his car. On the way over he told me he was a descendant of the Pilgrims and that his family had been living in Plymouth for generations.

When we entered his home he turned to his wife, a Barbara Frietchie type, and said, "Do you know who this is?" She put on her glasses and gasped, "Mr. Livingston from television. You have no idea how much your stories mean to us. Everything you say happened to us just the way you say, my goodness. . . ." I wonder whether Mr. Max Mefoofsky would have received the same welcome.

Culture in Tel Aviv and Environs

PETER GRADENWITZ

TEL AVIV

AT THE height of the New York season there are about twenty-five plays and musicals on Broadway; in an average week, there will be at least twenty concerts; about fifteen first-run films are being shown; there is opera and ballet. In Tel Aviv, with a population of around a quarter of a million against New York's eight million, in any week of the winter season you can see fifteen plays, hear eight concerts, go to the ballet, and choose among fifteen movies being shown in Israel for the first time. True, the halls are smaller, and the movie houses have only three reserved-seat showings a day; but the figures are still impressive. And, just as in New York, you can hardly get a seat to anything that is considered good.

At any time, each of the main theatrical companies – Habimah, Ohel, Kameri – is likely to have three plays going, presented in rotation on a modified repertory system, so that while one play is in Tel Aviv, a second is in Jerusalem, and a third in Haifa. The two variety groups–Matate and Li-La-Lo–stick to a single program, changing it every three to four months, and so do the operatic and ballet troupes. The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, still without a proper hall, plays each subscription program nine times in succession (six times in Tel Aviv, twice in Haifa, and once in Jerusalem), then gives three special series in Haifa and Tel Aviv. Recitalists, local and foreign, play to capacity audiences, with the visiting artists generally giving two different programs. Two different series of five to six concerts each are given for school children during the winter term, and the Tel Aviv Museum offers about forty chamber music concerts during a season–most of which are so heavily booked that they are repeated. Two theatrical groups play especially for children.

THE quantity of cultural fare is plainly amazing. What about the quality?

In its concerts, Israel can stand comparison with New York or any European metropolis. Not only is the country regularly visited by the greatest musical performers of the world, but it has its own excellent Philharmonic Orchestra and some individual artists whose solo and chamber-music recitals are always a delight to hear; in addition, the activities of the local chapter of the International Society for Contemporary Music–a weekly one-hour radio broadcast, mostly recorded, and public concerts–help keep the

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Israeli public acquainted with the latest trends in music. But the theater, by contrast, has remained provincial and rather backward. Music is the dominating force in the cultural life of Israel by virtue of its freedom from the bounds of language, whereas a large proportion of the public that might be interested in the theater has not yet mastered enough Hebrew to be able to enjoy a play. Moreover, most of the theatrical companies—with the notable exception of the Kameri group—stem from a very clearly defined cultural sphere, the Jewish world of the East European countries, and have retained the style of expression they brought with them to Palestine in the 1920's; that style can appeal only to a fraction of the population. Habimah has played under world-famous directors and has recently given noteworthy performances of *Death of a Salesman, Othello,* Beaumarchais' *Marriage of Figaro,* Strindberg's *The Father;* but Habimah is never so good in even the best of these as it is in *The Dybbuk* or other plays deriving from the East European background. The Ohel troupe, similarly, even where it has made excursions into world literature and presented classical and modern plays, has remained especially the provincial Workers' Theater; at the moment, its best offerings are those of its charming children's theater, Bimatenu. The old satirical theater Matate still gives performances of topical plays, but the satire, unfortunately, has to do with issues that have long since died.

But unique among the country's theatrical troupes is the Kameri, the Chamber Theater, founded in 1945 by young actors who could find no place in the older companies. Kameri has come to be the most successful of all Israel's theaters, partly through its choice of repertory but largely because its actors speak a "pure" Hebrew, unmarred by the heavy Russian accent which the younger Israeli generation finds unacceptable on the stage. Kameri began its career with *commedia dell'arte,* its productions of Goldoni's *Servant of Two Masters* and Beaumarchais' *Barber of Seville* being still fondly remembered; *The Shadow,* by Schwarz, a dramatization of a Russian fable, was another of its lasting successes. Recently Kameri gave Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie,* John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men,* and *The Queen of Sheba,* the nearest Israel has yet come to a modern musical comedy. *The Queen of Sheba* offered the most enjoyable theatrical evening in Israel in years; the comedy was written in German verse by Sammy Gronemann, a veteran German Zionist and a well-known playwright and wit, and translated into hilarious Hebrew doggerel by Haim Hefer. A. Abramovitz provided the songs, and Herbert Brun arranged and orchestrated them, and also contributed incidental music. The play deals with Sheba's visit to King Solomon's court, and describes the impact on highly civilized Jerusalem of the rather wild but charming people from faraway Ethiopia, "doin' what comes nacherly"; it is, of course, filled with topical allusions.

The difficulties of theatrical production in Israel are highlighted by the extraordinary fact that Kameri had to withdraw this hit musical play after a few weeks. The troupe plays in Tel Aviv in an old-fashioned, dirty little theater (the Mugrabi) with primitive facilities, and in other cities it performs in movie theaters that are certainly not equipped for theatrical productions. In fact, every performance by any one of the troupes is a major headache. In the case of *The Queen of Sheba,* performances had to be canceled altogether because Sheba and her royal companions, being very scantily clad, found the drafty theaters too uncomfortable; only the coming of warmer weather permitted the production to reopen. While the plays of the various Israeli companies are generally offered first in Tel Aviv, where theatrical conditions, such as they are, are best, Kameri has adopted the American custom of out-of-town try-outs. Its new productions are given their first showings in villages and in the kibbutzim. Since last March, Kameri has actually been using two Tel Aviv theaters simultaneously.

CONSIDERING the extent of theatrical activity, it is surprising to note how few plays are by Israeli authors. As I write, Kameri is offering no Israeli play, while Habimah is giving only *The Road to Elath* and Ohel only *Huts and the Moon.* In recent seasons there have been a few Biblical plays by Aaron Ashman, and some

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dramas connected with the War of Liberation and the pioneer years of the country by Moshe Shamir, Yigal Mossenson, Yehoshua Bar-Joseph, Shulamit Bat-Dori. It must be said that the Biblical plays have hardly grasped the greatness of their ancient themes, while the plays of pioneer and kibbutz life, as well as those dealing with the war, have not yet attained the dimensions of a living drama of any more than passing interest; incidentally, one of the worst productions of the past season was Shulamit Bat-Dori's *Huts and the Moon*, a play about a kibbutz by a group of young Ohel artists—it hardly came up to college dramatic-club standards.

The most original recent contribution to the Hebrew theater came, perhaps not surprisingly, from the dance-stage; this was Deborah Bertonoff's one-woman dance-drama *The Ascent to Jerusalem*, based on an idea by the poet Ze'ev. The three acts of the dance comprise a concise, dramatic summary of three periods of Jewish history. The first scenes portray the figures and events of Biblical history: Moses by the river's brink, the people of Israel in the wilderness, Deborah's song of victory, David as shepherd, the rule of Baal, the song of the exiles ("By the Waters of Babylon"). The second act deals with the long period of exile: its three scenes evoke for the audience the wandering people, the yearning exiles, the slaughtered martyrs. The final act is the homecoming of Israel: the sowing once again of seeds, the heroic defense of the resettled country, the rebuilding of Zion. A narrator heralds each short scene, reciting passages from the Bible in the first and third acts, while in the second act the narration is based on readings from Haim Nahman Bialik. Joseph Tal's interesting musical score takes up where the narrator leaves off, and the composer has tried to preserve the poetic style of the spoken lines. The evening had a rare quality of unity and coloring.

A STRANGE case is that of opera in Israel. Opera was presented in Hebrew to Palestinian pioneers long before there was a proper symphony orchestra, even before the theater was permanently established. Opera began in 1923, when Mordecai Golinkin arrived from Russia with a vision of a "Temple of Art." Since then, opera has had its ups and downs, numerous companies having risen and disappeared; but Mr. Golinkin is still going strong, and is a regular conductor of the now flourishing "Hebrew National Opera," though most of the performances are led by Georg Singer. Last year the New York *Times* was informed that the press would not be admitted to the so-called "National Opera" though they are now allowed in, the story may be worth while telling here—it exemplifies certain phenomena that are not inconspicuous in other fields of Israeli life today.

During World War II a troupe calling itself "The Palestine Folk Opera" flourished in the country. It reached a fairly high level under conductor Georg Singer and even staged an original opera, *Dan the Guard*, with libretto by S. Shalom and Max Brod and music by Marc Lavry. In 1944, after some years of this opera company's successful growth, Miss Edis de Philippe—an American singer born in Odessa—arrived in Tel Aviv, having, she said, declined engagements with the world's largest opera houses in order to offer her talents to the cause of opera in Palestine. To begin with, she would gladly sing *La Traviata*—without remuneration. Verdi's opera was prepared, but Miss de Philippe stipulated that only two scenes should be done, as the reception scene of Act I and the ballroom scene of Act II would be too costly to produce and anyway did not contain the best music. Israel then witnessed perhaps the strangest production of *La Traviata* that has ever been offered in an opera house, with a narrator in front of the curtain telling the story of the play in the omitted scenes, the orchestra accompanying his tale with a potpourri of the most popular music from these scenes, and a solo violin replacing the protagonists in the famous arias. Only when Miss de Philippe later sang *Carmen* was it discovered why she had insisted on the omission of the "costly" scenes from *La Traviata*: she simply did not have the high notes required by Violetta in the arias of these scenes. In her later roles, a simpler expedient was used: the higher notes were sung an octave or so lower.

La Traviata was mildly successful; Miss

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de Philippe undoubtedly had the stage appearance and manners which had up till then been lacking in local operatic production. But though she sang without fee, her expense account was more than the "Folk Opera" could bear; and this, and the forced abandonment of former excellent productions, led to its early ruin. Miss de Philippe and Mr. Simcha Even-Zohar, former secretary-general of the Histadrut, then organized the "Hebrew National Opera," taking in with them the veteran Mr. Golinkin. A dictatorial policy, not to speak of the absence of any artistic enterprise, has characterized the operation of this private—and not in any sense national—institution ever since. Operas have been selected to fit the limitations of Miss de Philippe's vocal range, and whenever she herself did not "star," she produced and directed. Visiting vocalists were employed, it is true, but the country's best and most experienced opera singers found it impossible to work with the "triumvirate" (as the three directors once called their board). The press was unanimous in demanding certain reforms and in deploring the depths to which opera had sunk in Israel.

Thus there came the day of a certain opera premiere when no journalist had received a ticket; the secretary of the Journalists' Association called the company's office, to be told that only a single press critic had been invited and all the others were "unwanted." The critics then bought tickets for the performance, but ushers barred their way into the theater. The critics appealed to the police, whereupon Miss de Philippe called the Minister of Police at his home and he ordered his officers on the scene to send the critics home rather than allow a scandal. A subsequent move to take the matter to court was stifled.

The Music Advisory Council appointed by the Ministry of Education and Culture, which was subsidizing the company, then appointed a committee to look into its affairs and make a detailed report. After several months' hearings, which produced some quite extraordinary information concerning both the artistic and financial management of the "triumvirate," the committee recommended that the company be reorganized; its directors refused, and the Music Department of the Ministry thereupon withdrew its subsidy. The music director of Kol Israel (the national radio station), a member of the Advisory Council, was asked to stop broadcasting the performances, the customs authorities were asked to grant the company no further privileges, and the newspapers were asked to stop carrying the Opera's announcements and advertisements. But Mr. Even-Zohar, who had in the meantime married Miss de Philippe, is a veteran Histadrut official and on friendly terms with most of the cabinet ministers: the office of the Prime Ministry ordered Kol Israel to continue broadcasting the productions, the Minister of Education asked the press and the customs not to interfere. And the "Hebrew National Opera" is still going strong. Its standards have not improved, but audiences flock to it because no other opera is available at the moment (though the short-lived "Musical Theater" will probably be reorganized).

THERE is little to add to what is generally known about the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. It continues to be an excellent group of musicians, the quality of its ensemble playing being dependent to a large degree on the conductor in charge. It is a major calamity for the development of musical standards in Israel that the orchestra—the best equipped and, in spite of many shortcomings, best functioning cultural body in the country—has never found (and never seriously sought) a permanent conductor and an authoritative manager. Like so many bodies in Israel, the orchestra is managed on a collective basis, with the main decisions lying in the hands of a musicians' committee. The discipline, the programs, and the entire policy of the orchestra leave much to be desired, and magnificent though many of its concerts are, no artistic unity has been achieved in the seventeen years of its existence. The programs are generally those of the big names—conductors and soloists—and the public has been educated to see and hear a great personality rather than an interesting program or a new work. Local conductors and soloists have a very small share in the orchestra's concert activities, as have Israeli composers: this year, for instance, the season began in early October, and by the end of February just one

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Israeli composition had been played—and that in a special subscription series of three concerts. Only in the under-rehearsed Youth Concerts did the orchestra play additional works by Israeli composers. As for local soloists, two pianists were included in the programs—both choosing hackneyed virtuoso works—and several orchestral musicians were also called on for solo performances.

But so far the orchestra stands unrivaled as regards the quality of performance; the Haifa Orchestra is too young to compete—though it may one day—and the orchestra of the radio station Kol Israel in Jerusalem has so far lacked the necessary basis of security and the right training facilities, while its members have been employed in too many divergent tasks.

It is hard to say what direction Israel's cultural development will take in the next years. With the large influx of Orientals, to whom the world of Western culture is fundamentally foreign—and vice versa—the community is undergoing a basic change. Last year I attended a show arranged by the Institute of Oriental Musical Research, where singers, instrumentalists, and dancers from various Oriental communities—Yemenite, Bukharian, Caucasian, and others—demonstrated their traditional forms of singing and playing to a thrilled audience. The possible significance of this show for Israel's future culture was pointed up in the remarks of an official of the Ministry of Education and Culture, who said to the pianist Frank Pelleg, at that time head of the Music Department of the Ministry: "You find all this exotic. But in twenty or thirty years, the audience may consist of those Yemenites and Bukharians and Caucasians listening to you as you demonstrate a piano, and one of their scholars will explain what a piano is, or rather what a piano *was*, and add: 'Here you have a man who still plays this obsolete instrument.'"

Whether the Orientals will ever come to terms with Western theater and music is not easy to foresee. Nor can we predict how much of Oriental traditions the Western Jew will eventually incorporate into his own ways of life and styles of art. But there has already been a considerable cultural interplay in music: the melodic flosculas and rhythmic patterns of the Orient and the ancient yet so novel-sounding instrumental colors of Oriental music have gone a long way already in shaping the Israeli composer's musical style and expression. Those who fear the cultural influence of the Oriental immigration may take some comfort from the consideration that precisely the Oriental influence has led to Israel's musical works being sought everywhere in the world as a novel and interesting contribution to contemporary music. Publishers in all major European countries now publish and distribute Israel's music, and one of America's leading music firms, Leeds Music Corporation of New York City, is doing much toward making the young country's best musical creations known in the Western Hemisphere. Israel, so far famed chiefly for her achievements in the musical reproducing and performing field, has now begun to compete internationally in artistic creation as well, and it is to be hoped—with some degree of justified expectation—that her contribution to the world's music will be more unified and purposeful in character than her somewhat chaotic—even if rich and varied—musical and theatrical life at home.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE SOVIET ECONOMY?

Much of the Jigsaw Puzzle Is Missing

NICOLAS SPULBER

"MAKE statistics class-conscious and party-conscious!" This is the slogan governing economic reporting and research in the entire Soviet orbit today, and it has been acted upon with greater success than almost any other of the jargon-filled directives of the Stalinist world. Freely translated, it means: "Conceal both your strengths and your weaknesses, so that the outside world will never know definitely either your achievements or your failures."

From the early 1930's, the Russians have worked increasingly to perfect this process of concealment and distortion. More and more they have limited the information they release to that alone which inflates their achievements. More and more statistical data are withheld and accordingly it becomes more and more difficult, at times downright impossible, to check the figures that *are* released. Finally, the Soviet bureaucrats have taken ever greater liberties with statistical method itself: only rarely do they explain how the units counted were defined in the first place, how the data were gathered, or the total figures computed. Accordingly, the statements on economic development that come from official Soviet sources today present themselves as riddles.

HERE is one example from N. Voznesenski's book on the war economy of the USSR, as quoted by Professor A. Gerschenkron of Harvard in his note on Voznesenski's book in the *American Economic Review* (September 1948): "The number of workers and salaried employees in 1943 was 38 per cent lower than in 1940 although the share of industrial workers and salaried employees increased from 35 per cent in 1940 to 39 per cent in 1943."

Professor Gerschenkron comments: "The total number of workers and salaried employees in 1940 equaled 30.4 million (cf. Voznesenski, 'Report to the 18th Conference of the Communist Party,' *Pravda*, February 19, 1941). Accordingly, industrial workers and salaried employees in 1940 equaled .35 × 30.4 = 10.64; the total number of workers in 1943 equaled 30.4 × 62 = 18.85 of which industrial manpower = 39 percent = 7.35 million." Thus, it could be deduced from Voznesenski's enigmatic statement that the number of industrial workers in the USSR decreased considerably during the war: in 1940 there were 10.64 million; in 1943, 7.35.

To be sure, all Russian economic riddles are not so susceptible of solution as this—assuming that we have solved this one. Every Russian official knows that to supply too many answerable riddles is to risk being purged or liquidated—as happened to Voznesenski.

For many years now, economists studying publications dealing with economic statistics have become accustomed to seeing, under the heading "Soviet Union," rows of dots, signifying the absence of all information. Perhaps no country makes such a fetish of statistics—and releases so few. NICOLAS SPULBER, a specialist in the economics of Eastern Europe and Soviet Russia, here describes how economists in this country attempt to reach behind this most impenetrable of iron curtains to gain some knowledge of the Soviet economy and its workings. Mr. Spulber has written in many periodicals, in this country and abroad. He holds a doctoral degree from the New School for Social Research. His thesis dealt with the economic relations between Soviet Russia and Eastern Europe since the Second World War.

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Why not then enforce a blackout over all statistical data instead of releasing the present huge amount of disconnected, merely descriptive, or completely meaningless material? For one thing, "statistics" have been an official Soviet fetish for too long a time to be suppressed entirely. It is part of the scientific technology on which the Russians lay such stress, and Marx's reliance upon figures and tables in his theoretical work would have hallowed the statistical method in their eyes in any case. Besides, the whole activity of Soviet society, political, economic, social, literary, and scientific, is geared to the achievement of the Politburo's plans and projects of the moment, and figures are the only way of telling what happens. Furthermore, the Kremlin's claim to appeal to the judgment of the world always on the basis of "facts, not words," likewise requires that a constant stream of "economic" data be poured out, both to impress and confuse, even if the regime's real intention is to pull tighter the curtain of secrecy.*

The task of studying Soviet economics is, hence, a peculiarly difficult one; in addition, even if we are successful in piercing the curtain of confusion and getting some "significant" data, we still have the difficult problem of evaluating these statistics for an economy very different from our own. What appears significant to us may have little or quite different significance in the USSR. What is the meaning, for example, of "price levels" when these are determined by state fiat? They may tell us more about the political aims of the regime than about the supply and demand of different products. On the other hand, it is evident that the foreign aims of the Soviet regime constitute the greatest single political problem in the world today. Regardless of the paucity of data available, regardless of the difficulties involved, we must therefore keep on trying to get at the reality behind the Iron Curtain. This is why the study of the Soviet economy has become a major concern of American economists, despite the frustrations involved.

Let us look now at some of the concrete results these scholars have achieved.

THE central economic problem of any organized society, "planned" or "unplanned," revolves around the creation and distribution of the (yearly) "national product." The "national product" must be divided between *consumption* and *accumulation,* between that which is currently consumed, and that saved and invested in order to further increase productive capacity. The way in which the part reserved for consumption is distributed depends on social stratification, on the standards of living prevailing in the society, on the incentives felt at the various social levels, and so on. The amount of the part reserved for accumulation, and the ends for which it is invested, depend on the development of the society—the degree to which it is industrialized—as well as on the strength and extent of state control. The stronger the state, and its grip on economic life, the easier for it to determine and control what is assigned to consumption and what retained for investment in either civil or military undertakings. The basic aim of research in Soviet economy is to ascertain its strength —that is, the physical volume and the rate of growth of its industrial production, the size of the Soviet national income, the proportion of it used for investment, and so on.

The dynamic element in the increase of the national product is the increase and diversification of *industrial* production. We know in general that a vastly increased industrial production has been from the beginning the primary economic—as well as political—objective of the Soviet regime, and that consumption has been limited for this purpose. According to the official figures released by the Soviet Union, the gross value of her industrial production increased more than fourteen times in the twenty-two years from 1928 to 1950 — covering the period since the first Five Year Plan—an increase that would have been far greater if not for the war.

These figures have been computed on the basis of "comparable" or "fixed" prices. In order to keep constant the unit of measure of their industrial output and avoid the impact of variations in price, the Russians have used for their computations the prices of a base

* The bulk of information on Soviet economics is gathered from the Soviet press: *Pravda, Izvestia,* national and local magazines and publications, and sometimes the Soviet radio. Additional information has also been obtained from refugees from the USSR. Now and then there is a windfall, such as the unexpurgated edition of the third Five Year Plan, captured during the war by the Germans and subsequently captured by the United States. It furnishes much valuable material for research.

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year, 1926-27, the last "normal" year before the beginning of large-scale national planning. In terms of these prices, the gross value of Soviet industrial output rose from 16.8 billion rubles in 1928 to 95.5 billion in 1937, fell to 88.4 billion in 1945 as a result of the war, and rose again at a fantastic pace to 239.6 billion in 1950.

Fixed prices are, of course, the correct way to measure the actual increase in the value of output from year to year. But under rapid industrialization base-year prices can become obsolete in a very short time: new products appear that were not produced in the base year, and hence have no base-year price; certain items produced in very limited quantities and at very expensive prices in the base year are now produced on a mass scale and at far lower prices—and so on.

In the Soviet index, new items that entered the stream of production were given at the prices at which they were first produced. For example, the production of cars and trucks in the USSR began only in the early 30's, and the fixed price, for index purposes, assigned to a car or a truck was its 1932-34 price, namely nine or ten thousand rubles. In 1932-34 most Soviet trucks and automobiles were reproductions of Fords. These articles, which would have been sold at around $600 in 1926-27 in the United States, were, at the rate of exchange prevailing in 1932-34, priced at the Russian equivalent of $4500! (This example is from Naum Jasny's *The Socialized Agriculture of the USSR*, Stanford University Press, 1949.) For reasons like these, it is impossible to give any stable value, in terms of physical volume of production, to these over-all figures at fixed prices. It is perfectly clear therefore why the index of production shot up so rapidly: when an item that costs a penny in the West begins to be produced for the first time in the USSR at the cost of ten cents, naturally the value, *in Soviet money*, of Soviet production will mount skyhigh as soon as such an item goes into production.

Even before the war, some Soviet statisticians clearly perceived this problem. But the central statistical office of the USSR ignored their objections, and continued to calculate the volume of Russian industrial production in terms of (comparable) "prices of 1926-27," using the results not only for propaganda purposes, but also to establish the real targets of the national plans. Only in March of this year did it finally abandon this practice, and establish as the new price index the wholesale prices in effect in Soviet heavy industry on January 1, 1952.

Why the Soviet central statistical office clung to the "1926-27 fixed prices" long after their uselessness had been conclusively shown is one of the many Soviet mysteries. Propaganda aims do not explain it adequately, because the same figures were used in planning, too, and must have caused great difficulties: one can see one industry being assigned a goal much larger than another's, though the value of their products was actually the same. Nor can we charge the practice to "Russian inefficiency and incompetence," since Russian statisticians themselves were among the first to criticize it. Perhaps the real explanation lies in the egomania of the Stalinist bureaucracy, which must have found its greatest gratification in these leaping figures.

From the early 30's it was perfectly clear to Western scholars that the Soviet index of industrial production was inflated. For example, it could be seen that the increase in industrial volume was completely out of gear with the far slower increases in the Soviet's production of basic raw materials such as iron, coal, and steel. The figures for the machine industry and those for ferrous metals, which of necessity maintain a given relation in all other economies, appeared completely unbalanced. But when Western economists tried to figure out the extent of the inflation they came up against a stone wall. The Russians had taken timely precautions. Aside from the exceptional case of car and truck prices, no actual 1926-27 prices were, or are, made available at all. And since 1931 the relation between 1926-27 prices and current prices has not been published.

One solution to this problem of measuring the true pace of Russian industrialization has been undertaken by Alexander Gerschenkron of Harvard. He has constructed a complex index of Russian machinery output, based on American prices for the same goods in 1939. He first gathered from the Soviet press figures on the production of given types of machines. He then tried to establish the 1939 United States prices for these machines, and so set

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up an index to measure production. His index showed that Russian machinery output increased at a much slower rate than the Russians contended. (*A Dollar Index of Soviet Machinery Output 1927-28 to 1937*, Rand, 1951.)

While this work is admirable for its skill and audacity, it is subject to serious criticism: as Professor Gerschenkron himself points out, his index measures Soviet growth with the prices of a highly developed economy, in which all the savings of mass production and experience are already reflected. While the Russians inflate their achievements by using the prices of an agricultural economy which produced a very small quantity of industrial products, Professor Gerschenkron's index tends to deflate them by using the prices of the most advanced economy. Thus we are still left on inconclusive ground.

Since we cannot establish the rate of overall industrial growth in the USSR, any comparison with, for instance, the United States in this respect has to be undertaken on the basis of the physical volume of production of such basic commodities as coal, iron, steel, oil, etc. The figures for their production can be gathered from the published texts of the Soviet economic plans, from official pronouncements on the fulfilment of these plans, and from various specialized periodicals. The following comparison is illuminating.

In 1928, on the eve of the first Five Year Plan, Russia's annual coal production was about equal to that of America's in 1870; its production of electric power equal to ours in 1902; of pig iron equal to ours in 1890; and its railroad mileage was about the same as ours in 1869. At the end of the first two Five Year plans (1928-1937), Russia's increase in annual output of coal was equivalent to the increase we achieved in the seventeen years between 1870 and 1887; its increase in electric power was equivalent to ours in the twenty years between 1902 and 1922; its gain in steel matched ours in the fifteen years between 1890 and 1905. In the case of pig iron, petroleum, and copper, the American rates of growth were equal to the Russian, and, in the key sector of railroad mileage, the United States accomplished as much in the two years from 1869 to 1871 as Russia did in eleven years under central planning from 1928 to 1940. We may conclude therefore that though the Russian rate of industrial growth has been impressive under the Soviets, it is not unique, and was matched by the rate of growth achieved by American capitalism in years past.

OVER-ALL figures for "national income" have an even greater effect on the modern imagination than data on industrialization. The idea of encompassing in one set of figures the activities of innumerable individuals in countless occupations—of an entire nation—is a spectacular one. Since the early 30's, the concept of "national income" has become the most popular one of all in economics. However, few of those who quote national-income figures realize the complexities of the term. While all economists may agree that "net national income" is the net value of all economic goods produced by a nation in a given period, Soviet and Western economists will disagree about what is meant by "net value," by "economic goods," and by the term "produced."

The West embraces, under the term national income, *the net products of all activities (of the nation) connected through the market.* The statisticians of the U.S. Department of Commerce consider each individual—whether a worker, an entrepreneur, a doctor, a clerk, President Truman, or Senator Taft—under three headings: what he contributes to the national income by work and services, what he receives in income (in effect, the former is measured by the latter, with certain important exceptions), and what he spends of income. These three sums, after certain adjustments, must balance.

Quite different is the Soviet concept, which is derived from a mechanical and schematic interpretation of Marx. According to Marx, the value of each *material good* consists of two parts; it is made up, on the one hand, of the value of the raw material plus that added by the machine, and, on the other, of a part newly created and added by the worker. The value added by the worker is equal in monetary terms to the wage he receives, *plus* the "surplus value," or profit, pocketed by the owners of the means of production. In the capitalist system, this owner is the private entrepreneur; in the USSR, he is the state. But in both cases, surplus is created and appropriated.

Under the Russian interpretation of this

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scheme, a writer, a barber, a clerk, Stalin himself, and all his state and party officials, since they are not "workers," do not add in any way to the national income. They are only consumers of income "derived" from the value added by industrial and agricultural workers. Since the wages of all other groups are merely "derivative income," it would be erroneous to include them in the total of the net national income. Thus the Russians have concerned themselves only with the origins of their national income—namely its source in industry, agriculture, trade, transportation, and construction—and do not tell us of income earned in the other, derivative areas of economic activity. It would, of course, be interesting to know, even in Russian terms, how the national income is distributed among the various strata of society, and it has often been suggested by Russians themselves that such information be prepared. But if it has, it has never been published: the central statistical office evidently does not care to show the relation between "derivative income" (in which there must bulk large that of the top-heavy bureaucracy) and "newly created value" in the USSR.*

The Russians have published some figures on national income according to their standard of fixed (1926-27) prices, as well as according to certain tabulations of the source of national income. After the war, they published some percentages on the basis of which the national income in these fixed prices could be deduced for the years up to 1950. This showed that the Soviet national income computed in 1926-27 rubles rose from 25 billion in 1928 to 210 billion in 1950.

We have already indicated the weaknesses of these figures as indices of industrial production. They show equally grave shortcomings as regards national income. Thus in 1928 the contribution of agriculture to the Soviet national income in "fixed prices" represented 37.6 per cent of the total. In 1934 this contribution had fallen to only 16.8 per cent. In more recent years we tread on shifting ground. It would appear that the agricultural contribution represented 11.7 per cent of the national income in 1940 and less than 8 per cent in 1950. Undoubtedly, with the increase in industrialization, agriculture has lost much of its previous weight in the Soviet economy. Nevertheless, it seems incredible that *more than half* of the population of the country—for more than half still does work the land in Russia—should have contributed *less than 8 per cent* of its income. We must conclude again that the national income derived from industry has been greatly exaggerated—as we have already been led to conclude on other grounds.

BUT, once again, detecting the exaggeration is not the same as knowing its extent. Here, too, the specialists had a hard nut to crack.

Among all those who have applied themselves to this problem of calculating Soviet national income in a meaningful way, it seems to me that Professor Abram Bergson, of Columbia, has done the most fruitful work. His "Soviet National Income and Product in 1937," which appeared in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* for May-August 1950, is one of the most decisive contributions in the field of Soviet economics.

Abandoning the Soviet figures for national income in 1926-27 rubles, Professor Bergson addressed himself solely to the data that the Russians have released in *current rubles* (budget figures, wages, taxes, defense expenditures, etc.). This kind of data had been neglected hitherto as a basis for the recalculation of the Soviet national income. He recast these figures in the familiar form of the U.S. Department of Commerce tabulations of national income. Naturally, tremendous problems arose. For example, when we attempt to calculate agricultural output and its value in current rubles, we discover that part of the agricultural product is paid to the government in kind, in return for the use of its agricultural machinery; part must be sold under compulsion to the government at artificially low prices; part is sold to the government on a voluntary basis, at higher prices; part is retained for seed and fodder; part is sold on the retail collective-farm market. How, then, are we to estimate the *total value* of the Soviet agricultural product?

Professor Bergson dealt with these and a host of other problems, and he constructed,

* The Russian concepts and methods, as distinguished from the Western ones, are defined in the *Slovar Spravochnik po Sotsialno Ekonomicheskoi Statistike* ("Dictionary and Guide to Socio-Economic Statistics," Central Bureau of the USSR State Planning Committee for 1944).

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for the year 1937, what amounted to a new over-all account, in its details, of the structure, origin, and distribution of Soviet national income. Borrowing for the occasion the Marxian concept of "surplus value," Professor Bergson pointed out that the so-called "rate of exploitation" (or rate of surplus value or profit, which was defined as the proportion of surplus value to the wages received by workers who created "value" in the Marxist sense) must be much higher in the "socialist" than in the capitalist world. For 1937, the "surplus value"—or all types of profit—calculated as a percentage of the national income, amounted to 38 per cent in Russia as against 36 per cent in the U.S. If one takes into consideration, however, the effect of the Russian turnover tax, which is a means of concentrating additional "surplus value" in the hands of the state, the percentage of surplus value appropriated in the USSR rises even further, to as much as 48 per cent of the national income.

The figures also show that Russian households consumed about 54 per cent of the gross national product, or total production of the year, as against 74 per cent by American households. This smaller proportion of consumption in Russia, we must realize, came from a much smaller gross national product and had to satisfy a much larger population. Moreover, consumption falls to only 43 per cent of the gross national product once we eliminate the consumer goods absorbed by the state apparatus.* This fantastically low rate of consumption permitted in 1937 an investment in capital equipment of 32.5 per cent of the net national income (of which 7.4 per cent went for military investment) as against half as great a proportion in the U.S.—16 per cent (of which 1 per cent went for defense).

Professor Bergson's study is the first step toward a complete recomputation of the Soviet national income during the period of the Five Year plans. In a series of preliminary papers, as yet unpublished, Professor Bergson has also computed the Soviet national income and product for 1940, 1944, and 1948. To most of the specialists in the field, it is clear that only this type of work can place the economic comparison between the two systems on more solid ground.†

AT THIS point, we begin to be able to approach the major questions posed by the Soviet economy: Does an over-all planned economy produce more goods with less work than a market economy? Does planning eliminate waste, and enable more economic goods to be produced with the same resources? Let us take a closer look at the mechanism of Russian planning.

According to Russian accounts, the starting point in planning is the necessity of insuring the correlation between the development of the various branches of the economy: in other words, the planning board checks the needs of one industry against the aims of the industries that supply it, and checks their various goals against the over-all availability of resources. The starting point is the establishment of realistic goals in such basic fields as coal, iron, ore, steel. The second step is to make the goals in the industries that depend on these resources consistent with the goals set for the industries that produce the latter.

If this procedure were to be consistently carried out in all its implications, it would require the solving of literally millions of equations, and this would become the chief

* The Russians do not publish a cost of living index. The measurements of the changes in the Soviet standard of living undertaken outside of the USSR take various forms: studies of changes in the yearly value of per capita consumption, studies of the consumption of given consumer goods per capita, construction of an index of cost of living based on selected consumer goods, and so on. All are open to criticism. For example, a cost of living index based on prices for selected products—a pre-war attempt of Professor Prokopovitch—is difficult to interpret, because of multiplicity of prices for the same product at given times (1928-1935 and again 1941-1947). Comparisons of purchasing power per work hour between the United States and Russia are also of limited value. The evidence on wage rates is too sparse to determine real wages, since these are affected by the allocation of substantial premiums and bonuses, sometimes more important than the nominal wage itself. Thus, the best gauge of the level of consumption remains its measurement as a proportion of the national income.

† All the Soviet satellites have taken up the Soviet practice of reporting increases in their national incomes in percentage form. This has had some amusing consequences: Rumania, for instance, has never had any calculation whatsoever made of her national income, so that the percentages in her case are figured on no apparent base.

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economic activity of the country. Since this is impossible, the plan concentrates on essential items and gears the economy toward the realization of the goals set for these items. This means that, for many industries, "planning" is left quite incomplete and in mid-air. There is enough steel targeted to meet the demands of the locomotive and airplane industry, but a shortage may develop in hairpins, or perhaps in some vital machine part. Furthermore, at any point many alternatives can present themselves to the planners—for example, whether to invest in a new plant with labor-saving machinery, or to use more labor at the old machines. How does the planning board choose between these alternatives?

In the capitalist system any choice can—at least theoretically—be made by taking into consideration the rate of return of one investment as compared to the other. The Russians shy away from such a criterion. The acceptance of the Marxist labor theory of value precludes the concept of a "return" on capital. But, by refusing to use such a concept, they are in fact left without any guide whatsoever in choosing between alternatives, and hence the basic problem of eliminating inefficiency and waste is left untouched.

Much has been written on this question, but this writer feels that there can be no real solution of the problem under present Soviet planning, and that the waste must be enormous—as, indeed, the available evidence seems to show.

Now, having indicated how ignorant we still are, despite nearly five hundred research projects undertaken on Russia, and one hundred on the Eastern European countries that are now under way in the United States, it would perhaps be helpful to conclude with a simple comparison of economic strength.

Despite all the blanks in our knowledge of the Soviet economy, the figures would indicate that things are very much in favor of the U.S. The enormous growth of American production since 1939, and the destruction suffered by the USSR in the war, have greatly lowered the relative strength of the Soviet Union, which was small enough to start with. Except in coal, the combined industrial potential of the USSR and Eastern Europe is today smaller in comparison with that of the U.S. than was the Russian potential alone in the pre-war period, as can be seen from the following table, based on official Soviet and East European output figures, which shows Soviet production expressed in percentages of U.S. production:

	USSR 1937	*USSR and Eastern Europe 1950*
Coal	31.2	71.5
Petroleum	18.3	16.2
Electric Power	31.6	29.3
Pig Iron	50.7	40.6
Steel	41.9	40.4

Against this, however, we must place the fact that a much smaller proportion of Russian production goes into general consumption, and a much higher proportion to the armed forces. And since the Russian standard of living is so low, the same amount spent on the military in Russia will go much farther than in America. Beyond that, Russia has in the event of war the possibility of rapidly and greatly expanding its industrial capacity by overrunning Central and Western Europe and Southeastern Asia. This would certainly render all the present comparisons obsolete and useless.

Yet, despite these uncertainties, the analysis of the rate of growth of Soviet industrial production, of Soviet national income, of its distribution and structure, of the possibilities and limitations of planning, of given Soviet economic categories such as wages and prices, of the various aspects of the Soviet control over Eastern Europe—all this is of enormous importance. In spite of many gaps and imperfections, such analysis affords the most useful clues we have to the nature of Soviet economic life. But even the best statistics and the best analysis, we must realize, cannot have a predictive value: life in the USSR is not an economic process deduceable as a function of economic data. It must always be remembered that the dynamics of Soviet life are political, not economic, and it is in the political sphere that final decisions rest.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

The Katyn Massacre

To the Editor of Commentary:

G. F. Hudson's thoughtful analysis of evidence in "Who is Guilty of the Katyn Massacre?" (Commentary, March 1952) points to the conclusion that the 11,000 Polish officers were murdered by the Russians. The thousands of letters, all dated before May 1940, which were found on the 4,500 corpses discovered, appear to be conclusive, for the Nazis could not have been in that area before July 1941. The Russian allegation that the bodies were exhumed by the Germans and all documents of later date removed would constitute a logical rebuttal, but this contention implies deeds so diabolical and so revolting to normal human conceptions that it is understandably rejected as incredible. Certain facts, however, have been overlooked by Mr. Hudson or were unknown to him and the authors of the three books he cites. An objective verdict would require these facts to be taken into account before a conclusion is reached.

It has been established beyond doubt that special German SS extermination squads called *Einsatzgruppen* were active on the entire Eastern front in liquidating all those considered racially or politically undesirable. In a Nuremberg war crimes trial, at which I was chief prosecutor, SS General Ohlendorf and twenty-one other Einsatzgruppen leaders were convicted of murdering over one million innocent people in the Eastern territories. The top secret official German reports sent by the Einsatz units to Gestapo Headquarters in Berlin, in which their activities were minutely described, were captured by the U. S. Army. These reports proved that Einsatz units murdered hundreds of thousands of Jews, officials, Communists, and other real or fancied opponents of Nazism in hundreds of towns and villages surrounding the Katyn area.

In the fall of 1942, when German retreat was imminent, the chief of the Gestapo, Mueller, sent an order to the Einsatzgruppen directing them to wipe out traces of the mass graves of persons they had executed. A special commando, "1005," was activated for this purpose and trained in exhuming and burning corpses.

Until the Germans were driven out at the end of 1943 the disinterring of bodies of Einsatzgruppen victims and the destruction of the mass graves was in progress. Even the top secret reports were silent about this fantastic activity, which is confirmed, however, by the court testimony and sworn affidavits of defendant SS Colonel Blobel who personally transmitted the order, and an SS man, Ruebe, who helped carry it out, as well as the testimony of Rudolph Hoess, commander of Auschwitz, which provided some of the working parties.

Worthy of note perhaps is the fact that in September 1942 the order to eliminate the traces of the mass murders they had committed was transmitted to SS Brigadier General Thomas, Einsatzgruppe C commander. Before October 23, 1942, Einsatzgruppe C moved into Starobjelsk. This was one of the three towns named by Mr. Hudson in which the Russians had interned the Polish officers before the spring of 1940 and where they were last seen alive. What was Einsatzgruppe C doing there? When it is recognized that the Nazis were desperately trying to conceal their monstrous crimes and were exhuming bodies buried long before, it becomes less incredible that they might have removed certain documents or deliberately planted others.

It would appear that there are some additional points which may require clarification before conclusive judgment about Katyn can be rendered.

Benjamin B. Ferencz

Nuremberg, Germany

To the Editor of Commentary:

I do not think Mr. Ferencz's account of the activities of the SS Einsatzgruppen is really relevant to the Katyn case. The purpose of the SS in exhuming and burning corpses of the victims of their mass murders was to remove the evidence of their crimes or at least to prevent identification. The reburial of corpses after faking of documentary evidence on them is quite a different matter from burning them. The question is whether such an operation could have been performed on more than 4,000 corpses under the conditions given, without leaving any traces detectable by medico-legal experts. I never suggested that the Soviet ver-

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sion should be rejected because it involved deeds too revolting to be credible; I am well aware that no deed was too horrible for the SS. But if the Polish Red Cross doctors, Mackiewicz and others, are to be believed, the condition of the corpses when dug up in April and May 1943 was such as to preclude absolutely the exhumation and reburial alleged to have taken place in March. It seems to me that there is no answer to this evidence unless the Polish witnesses are to be charged with having falsified it, and even then the fact remains that the Germans were willing to have an International Red Cross investigation which would surely have exposed them if they had done what the Russians claim that they did.

With regard to Starobjelsk, Poles from that camp who were sent to Pavlishchev Bor in the spring of 1940 testified that the camp had been completely cleared when their comrades were moved to an unknown destination, and according to the Soviet version the Polish prisoners at the time of the German invasion were no longer in the three original camps, but in camps to the west of Smolensk. It is therefore common ground to both the Soviet and Polish versions that none of the missing officers were in Starobjelsk when the Germans got there, and whatever the SS did there, it could have had no connection with the corpses found at Katyn.

G. F. HUDSON

Oxford, England

A Soviet Decree

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In order to rescue an innocent bystander from being hurt, I take the liberty of calling the attention of the reviewer of my book *Underground* (in the June number of COMMENTARY) to the fact that the "alleged Soviet decree, issued by Kalinin at the end of 1941, ordering the evacuation of Jews from the path of Germans," did not appear in a "pro-Soviet Yiddish book" but in a most authoritative study on the subject written by Moshe Kaganovich, who is in charge of the Central Historical Commission of the Union of Jewish Partisans in Italy. The quotation in dispute appears on page 188 of his highly praised book, *Participation of Jews in the Partisan Movement of Soviet Russia,* published by the Union of Jewish Partisans in 1948, in Rome, Italy.

Now, while I do not specialize in party labels, I have reason to believe that Moshe Kaganovich is a perfectly kosher Mapainik, and his book, according to the title page, was "edited by the Labor Zionist Committee for Relief and Rehabilitation Inc. in America (673 Broadway, New York)," which, to my knowledge, no one has ever suspected of pro-Soviet leanings.

DR. JOSEPH TENENBAUM

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Dr. Tenenbaum's letter confirms one of the points of my review of his book—his uncritical treatment of some of his source material. For despite Dr. Tenenbaum's facts on the editorial sponsorship of the book, it does suffer from a pro-Soviet bias. Kaganovich cites numerous cases of anti-Semitic acts and attitudes on the part of the Russian partisans. Yet he seems compelled to defend the Soviet Union's official position on anti-Semitism, using vague generalizations to rebut his own evidence. These appear on pp. 146, 160, 178, 187-188, 194, and elsewhere.

The critical reader of Kaganovich's book can distinguish between his facts and his wishful thinking—in which category the supposed Kalinin decree falls—and can separate the valid presentation from the invalid conclusions. Surely, it was not too much to ask this critical judgment also of Dr. Tenenbaum.

LUCY S. DAWIDOWICZ

New York City

The New Immigration Law

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I very much agree with Oscar Handlin (in the July issue) that the immigration fight has only begun. Equally I agree with him that the fight can be waged successfully only as a frontal attack on the national quotas system itself.

But I am sure that many who read Mr. Handlin's article will be all the more puzzled to understand why the reactionary McCarran bill became law by a vote of Congress overriding the President's veto. He gives entirely too much weight to McCarran's strategic position in Congress as an explanation. He does not give enough weight to two factors: the inadequate preparations of the proponents of the Humphrey-Lehman bill and the extent of the real and latent opposition to liberalization of immigration.

(1) Senators can do many things to arouse wide masses of the public in support of a bill they advocate. They can persuade friendly newspapers to publish series of informational articles well in advance of a vote on the bill. They can organize forces which will send speakers on the issue into thousands of labor union locals, church groups, and fraternal organizations. They can send out millions of mailing pieces under their Congressional franking privileges. They can badger opposing Con-

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gressmen by sending influential delegations from back home. They know these and many other ways to fight, but Senators Humphrey and Lehman and the supporters of this bill didn't use them in this case.

(2) Perhaps one reason they didn't is that they left it to others to do. But I'm quite sure that an additional reason is that they feared to stir up a hornet's nest. And here is Mr. Handlin's second mistake—he minimizes the present extent of the opposition. Ordinarily the first place Senators Lehman and Humphrey would turn to for support is the trade union movement. But in this case the American Federation of Labor is quite openly opposed to liberalized immigration, and the CIO looks better on the record but only in perfunctory formal resolutions from on top: the memories of mass unemployment are too vivid and there is no compensating faith that any change of government policy has made unlikely a repetition. A second place Senators Lehman and Humphrey often look for support—the more liberal Catholic organizations—likewise could not be mobilized for a fight against the quota system; it is one thing for these organizations to sponsor the Celler Bill, aiming to secure entry of 300,000 *refugees,* i.e., Polish, Baltic, and German Catholics in good part; but most of the Catholic hierarchy, in the face of permanent liberalization of immigration, would behave like the Catholic hierarchy in Canada—against. If such mass opposition exists in the camp which elected Senators Lehman and Humphrey, one begins to get an idea of the total amount of opposition.

I am for stirring up the hornet's nest. It is the only way to begin the long educational process which will eventually change enough people's minds to put an end to the racist national quotas system.

FELIX MORROW

New York City

"Commentary" in Israel

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

While staying in the Rest-Home in Kibbutz Shefayim last week, I happened to find in the reading room the February 1952 issue of COMMENTARY.

This is the first time that I have seen this periodical in Israel and I want to tell you how favorably I have been impressed by its contents. Especially interesting and well written were the two articles on Germany, the correctness of which I can confirm from my own visit to Germany last autumn.

I should like very much to read COMMENTARY regularly, but our foreign currency position being what it is, I am unable to pay for it in dollars. Would it perhaps be possible to find some American sponsor who could have a copy sent to Israel for me?

I am thirty-one years old, married, and an electronic technician employed by the Israel Ministry of Defense. I was born in Germany and have been living in Israel since 1936.

If I should receive COMMENTARY regularly, I promise to pass it on, after reading, either to any person or institution you might suggest, or to a public reading room, for example that of the Soldier's Welfare Committee, where I am sure it will be read to shreds.

E. GROSS

Haifa, Israel

On Movies

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Out of a scattering of separate acute insights, two over-all impressions remained with me from Manny Farber's "Movies Aren't Movies Any More," in the June COMMENTARY. The first was that Mr. Farber, with his accusations of calculated ambiguity and eclecticism, is guilty, in the "simplicity" of his observations, of creating a verbal facade for the vagueness of his concepts and constructions. The other is that with this ambiguity Farber has coupled a long-time inability to clearly appreciate the "story" element of a film, that is, the element which connects and makes relevant the images which Mr. Farber delights in scattering through his essays as Orson Welles scattered the pieces of Citizen Kane's jigsaw puzzle.

As Mr. Farber acknowledges at one point in the course of his essay, the "techniques"—the exaggerated use of closeups, etc.—with which he tries to down the latest enterprises of the movie industry, are common to films going a long way back: namely to 1925-1928 items like Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan of Arc* or Eric von Stroheim's *Greed.* . . . What Mr. Farber overlooks in mentioning the ambiguities of craftsmanship in *A Place in the Sun* or *A Streetcar Named Desire* is that such ambiguity is common to any image taken out of context. . . . Ideas are hardest of all to inject into a moving picture without the cooperation of an audience; and . . . the ideas of films by Huston, Wyler, *et al.,* are at last what the audience takes them to be. "Ambiguity" (there is none which is not inherent in the images *per se* of any film) is, in itself, a testimony to increased audience sensibility and its improved respect for the film medium as a medium. . . .

DONALD PHELPS

New York City

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Christians Against Jews

THE FOOT OF PRIDE. By MALCOLM HAY. Beacon Press. 352 pp. $3.75.

Reviewed by GEORGE N. SHUSTER

MALCOLM HAY has devoted most of a busy life to analyzing and deflating legends which have given rise to religious prejudice. The present book discusses the well-circulated superstitions which for many centuries have fanned Christian hatred of the Jew. No one will read it for pleasure, and we may doubt that many of those who might read it for profit will do so.

But Hay is a reputable scholar and his bibliography is extensive, though weak in German literature particularly. This book, perforce selective, is a review of anti-Semitic writings by professed Christians rather than a history of the mighty duel which has been engaged in by the two groups, though bits of the chronicle are sandwiched in to orient the reader.

After a somewhat perfunctory summary of conditions in ancient Rome, and a reference to the Johannine Gospel, Hay presents the first virulent Christian anti-Semite, St. John Chrysostom, who gave stature to the notion that the Jewish people were responsible for the death of Christ and therefore destined to be a living object lesson ever after. No such view had been held in apostolic times. But whereas Chrysostom seems to have been motivated primarily by a desire to prevent fraternizing between Jews and Christians, vulgar writers—some of them in high station—served quite different purposes after the dawn of the Middle Ages. Millions as a result began to believe that Christian boys were murdered for ritual purposes, that consecrated hosts were stolen from tabernacles so that the body of Christ might be tormented anew, and that treating a Jew with kindness and courtesy was an act of religious treason. Belief inevitably led in an emotional time to action, and so there came into being the dread sequence of medieval pogroms, no doubt the most ignoble of Christian betrayals of Christian teaching. Hay's analysis of how a charge of "deicide" led to wild efforts to avenge such a crime is succinct but good. One should not contend that all this lies in the dead past and that modern Christians are brought up on different fare. Of course many of them are. Today no reputable theologian would repeat the anti-Semitic fables of the Middle Ages, but unfortunately the theological knowledge of many Christians (and Jews) is no better than their spelling and arithmetic.

Hay is at any rate able to follow the development of literary comment which had its roots in the prevalent doctrine about Judaism and in the social situation then existing. Western Europe was at least nominally Catholic, and a clergy which took its missionary tasks seriously found it difficult to believe that the Jews resisted conversion because of honest religious conviction. The term *perfidis Judaeis* (perfidious Jews), which had early appeared in a prayer which is part of the Good Friday liturgy, was therefore used not in its original sense—that is, "without faith"—but in a new one, namely "treacherous." The end of the Middle Ages did not, however, bring about a notable change. Indeed, if one compares the efforts of St. Bernard, who preached against the massacres of Jews by mobs aroused to the pitch of fever by propaganda for the Crusades, or Pope Innocent III, with the Reformers or the leaders of the Counter-Reformation, one is inclined to feel that the situation deteriorated. That for a time the Christian world pursued witches rather than Jews afforded, it is true, a diversion.

A less naively religious modern time proceeded to confer luster upon a less theological series of anti-Semitic assumptions. Indeed, when Hitler was ready to embark upon his career of genocide, it was a great Catholic prelate, Cardinal Faulhaber of Munich, who rose to oppose him. The Cardinal, incidentally, is not mentioned by Hay. Hitler and the vast army of those who supported or agreed with him, in all the countries of the world, were not interested in whether the Jews had murdered Christ

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or in why they were so difficult to convert. Their contention, apart from crude prejudices embosomed in pseudo-biology, was that while Jews had an undercover grip on high finance, they were also the originators and apostles of Bolshevism. That Communism and all its affiliates are inspired by Jews is today the great Gentile mirage. Did not Karl Marx write *Das Kapital*? We must unfortunately understand that for many Christians Felix Frankfurter is the begetter of Alger Hiss, and Trotsky the secret soul of Stalinism.

Hay adds nothing to the discussion of the Nazi perversion, but deals very effectively with some of its precursors, who to be sure did not anticipate Auschwitz. Hilaire Belloc's *The Jews*, the only anti-Semitic tract in English by a writer of talent, is shown to be derived from the writings of Edouard Drumont, instigator and propagator of numerous alleged Jewish "conspiracies." Had Belloc written his book merely to report "what many people say about Jews"—instead of himself subscribing to the legends—he might have rendered some service. For the basic contemporary canards are all here. The "conspiracies" are accounted for by Jewish characteristics as diverse as the absence of a Jewish peasantry and the lack of a Jewish military tradition.

Israel is accepted by Hay with joy, in part because it proves that Jews can be farm workers and soldiers, and he spends some time reviewing Christian opposition to Zionism. It appears that admiration for the Arabs and poorly disguised contempt for Jews were more prevalent in England than in the United States. At any rate, the collection of barbed comments which Hay provides is nasty enough. Still it does not follow that many non-Jews who viewed Zionism critically were at bottom anti-Semitic. When Hay writes that the "gates of Israel are open to all who wish to enter; the Shield of David will protect them, and their children," he is voicing a hope which not a few will share who cannot rid themselves of fears that this may not be so.

When one has allowed the long and bitter story of Christian cruelty towards Jews to unfold, one cannot help feeling that it is uniquely horrible. Read what the otherwise gentle poet, Edmund Spenser, suggested be done with the recalcitrant Irish. Ponder the fate of the Japanese converts to Christianity made by Francis Xavier. Or review the story of the pillage of Silesia in 1945. Yet these seem episodic in their horrible way, whereas the infamy suffered by the Jew has been chronic. Nevertheless, thank God, it would be possible to write another book about the persistent efforts of many Christians to dam up the waters of hatred with love. Hay does not ignore them. He adduces St. Bernard, Léon Bloy, Charles Péguy, and others. There are many others.

Religious controversy between Christians and Jews, regardless of the fact that it has now become argument between several kinds of Christians and Jews, is unavoidable. It is merely to be hoped that the discussion can be conducted without venom, hate, and fiction. That few are aware of the long irenic tradition, though it is as old as St. Paul and as modern as Louis Finkelstein, is deplorable. Hay does not adduce the two greatest modern English Catholic theologians, Cardinal Newman and Baron von Huegel, who for all their fervent commitment to Christian teaching spoke of Judaism with respect. And how many of us recall that in Germany itself there was nobility? The German Catholic Center Party had from its inception in the mid-19th century a program directive to uphold and defend the rights of Jewish fellow citizens, and it was faithful to that directive until it was suppressed. Nor was there anywhere during the hectic years that followed the First World War a man who opposed anti-Semitism with greater vigor and conviction than did Ernst Troeltsch. I mention these, and wish I could add many more, because it seems to me that the story of a great hate should not lead one to forget the possible narrative of a great effort to mitigate that hate. Let me add, however, that I wish I could be as sanguine about the course of future history as Hay seems to be. I prefer to pray that American democracy may be the soil in which Christianity and Judaism may grow in amity.

Communism and the Land

MARX AGAINST THE PEASANT. A STUDY IN SOCIAL DOGMATISM. By DAVID MITRANY. University of North Carolina Press. 301 pp. $4.50.

Reviewed by EDUARD HEIMANN

This book, written by a British scholar of Rumanian origin, is an important contribution

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to the exploration of the contemporary scene. Its center is the story of the peasant organizations and peasant parties which sprang up and came to power in the countries of Eastern Europe after the First World War, were submerged and silenced by the nationalist dictators of the interwar period—Pilsudski, Horthy, Carol, etc.—emerged again in the Second World War, and have now been broken by the maneuvers of the local Communist parties under the pressure of the liberating or occupying Soviet armies.

Nothing quite like these autonomous peasant movements of the Slav countries has ever been known in the urbanized, liberalized, intellectualized countries of Western and Central Europe, where social thinking is dominated by the categories of capital and labor, and conventional methods and assumptions give social science no access to facts outside a narrow range of problems considered "rational," meaning an exclusive preoccupation with short-run technical efficiency and financial returns. From this point of view peasant movements appear "irrational" by definition, doomed either to be swept away automatically by man's inherent drive to a reason-guided life, or to be deliberately done away with in order to make room for such a higher form of life. But if it is true that man lives on the goods he makes, it is no less true that he lives in making them.

The setting of Mitrany's story is, geographically, the area between the West, including Germany, and the Russian East; ideologically, between Marxist theory and Russian populism (the Narodniki, the Social Revolutionaries, and others). His theme includes the ideological struggle between Russian populism and Marxism before 1917 as well as the continuance of the struggle, with political and economic weapons, after that date. Russian populism, strictly opposed to Marxist collectivism, had developed an autonomous idea of agrarian socialism based on the traditional village cooperative and its far-reaching method of work-pooling. (A study of the influence of populism on the kibbutzim in Israel should also prove highly rewarding.) The careful and loving analysis of this stream of thought and its use and abuse by the Communists is among the great merits of the book and forms a natural background for the related story of the movements farther to the West. The literatures of all the countries concerned, including the Hungarian and Rumanian enclaves in the Slav ocean of Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria, are used as material for the story. The book is very rich in detail and documentation, particularly in sixty pages of notes in small print, and an elaborate index facilitates its use.

The title is well chosen if it is understood that neither the plan nor the execution of the work have anything to do with the methods of current propaganda. The author has for more than thirty years made the Eastern European peasant revolts the cause not only of his studies but also of his heart, but throughout he upholds the standards of scholarly integrity, which in this case include a sympathetic understanding of the motives and actions of the peasants' Communist adversaries and conquerors. Indeed, Mitrany is a frank admirer of Lenin for the unique combination of his singleness of purpose with an unfailing sense of rapidly changing circumstances and an imaginative resourcefulness in meeting them. Since Lenin believed in the supreme right of proletarian rationality as the remedy for all ills, Mr. Mitrany seems to grant he had to act approximately the way he did, making short-run concessions to the peasants and helping them wherever he could in order to win their confidence and gradually get them to accept a goal which was his, not theirs. Lenin understood that it would have been fatal, both politically and morally, simply to violate the bulk of the working people. This is the heritage he left to all his successors, both in his own country and the Russian satellite countries, from the Baltic and Black seas to the Pacific. And this is the ultimate and decisive reason why the Communists could outdistance their Social Democratic rivals in the race for revolutionary leadership in all the Eastern peasant countries. The Social Democrats, like their more powerful fellows in the urbanized and industrialized Western countries, contented themselves with declarations of concern for the peasants' welfare and occasional assurances of sympathy for individual property in family farms, but never sought any real understanding of peasant life, and remained locked up in their time-honored formulas.

MITRANY's book is not without minor shortcomings. On the formal side, for all its vividness, it is hard going because of a strange lack of organization, a constant jumping back and forth in subject and time which must bewilder every reader not familiar with the historical material. We read on page 95: "In [Russian]

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agriculture, after 1930 the system of the cooperative artel was accepted as the most suitable form of collectivization. . . . The peasants were more satisfied, agricultural administration was improved and simplified, while the control of the state was as effective as on state farms"; then on page 96 an account of a controversy in the Communist party about the unorthodox form of the kolkhoz; on pages 98 and 99 a discussion of Lenin's varying use of rural cooperatives (he had died in 1924), culminating in the sentence "He made practical use of those [cooperatives] he found in Russia, putting them under control or loosening the reins, whichever served his immediate needs, until the time came when they were suppressed altogether in 1936"; then on page 100 Stalin's admission that collectivization had been "a second revolution"; and finally on page 101, in the course of a polemic against John Strachey, the sentence "Soviet Marxism on political grounds exterminated several million peasants in the process of imposing by force . . . the scheme of things assumed by Marx and Engels to be right."

Mitrany is not as familiar with Western developments as with those in the Eastern belt of Europe, which, after all, are his main topic. His presentation of the agrarian problem of Western Marxism is therefore somewhat spotty. More serious is the fact that his knowledge of general rural developments in the West is restricted. There is hardly any mention of Scandinavia and Holland, no mention at all of the role the peasants have been playing in the economic life of these countries and their democracy, no word on the cooperative development there. The statement that in all Western countries the peasants turned conservative (page 144) after a brief flirtation with the left is not quite wrong, if taken literally, but must be put to the test of the question: why in the world should these prosperous cooperators in their stable democracies and their coalition governments with reformed labor parties have turned to radicalism? Nor does our author make use of the opposite example: the disaster of Weimar Germany, where the Social Democrats drove the peasants into the arms of fascism by insisting, for example, along with the big business parties, on the foreclosures of farms (in the great depression), leading the peasants to rally under the black banner against the bailiffs.

It should be clear by now, one hundred years after Bishop Grundvig founded in the Danish villages his winter schools for citizenship and farming, that the merits of small-scale enterprise in agriculture cannot be sensibly discussed unless it is organized to the best of its potentialities; this, however, requires the technical and organizational schooling of peasants, and as part of that schooling, the establishment of cooperatives for marketing, purchases, the use of machines, etc. As for Marxism, if the goal of collectivization was relentlessly pursued by Lenin throughout all the perplexing detours of his strategy, this ultimately was not because Marx and Engels thought collective farming to be the most productive form; Mr. Mitrany, like almost everybody else, ignores the official Soviet publication of 1931 where statistical evidence is to the contrary (Obolensky-Ossinsky, Ronin, Gayster, and Kraval, *Social Economic Planning in the USSR*, 1931). Lenin's motive was different. History, he believed, has produced in the industrial proletarian the perfectly rational man, who, deprived of personal life and spontaneity, merges in the collective pursuit of collective welfare and thus makes possible the rationalized, conflictless society, which Marx proclaims as the goal and salvation of mankind; and where history had failed to produce this type of man, it must be forced to produce him: the "backwardness" of the peasants had to be "liquidated." This is the logic of Lenin and Stalin as it must have been that of Marx. The study of Marxism must begin with the understanding that it is not at all a system of positivism, bowing to facts and experience; it is a dogmatic Messianic system in scientific garb.

Howe to Read Faulkner

WILLIAM FAULKNER: A CRITICAL STUDY. By IRVING HOWE. Random House. 203 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by RICHARD CHASE

MR. HOWE has written a pleasing and helpful introduction to William Faulkner. His book reminds us, first of all, how far we have gone since the 1920's and 30's, when Faulkner's stories were regarded as merely symptoms or oddities, full of "morbidity," gratuitous grotesquerie, and a meaningless "Southern" violence of rhetoric and emotion. (One is not sure

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Another look at the lonely crowd . . .

Faces in the Crowd

Individual Studies in Character and Politics

by David Riesman
in collaboration with Nathan Glazer

In this searching book, Mr. Riesman continues the productive explorations into the minds of Americans that he began in *The Lonely Crowd,* probing the lives and thoughts of some of the people who make up the crowd: young preparatory school students, slum dwellers, rich suburbanites, and others who represent the inner- and other-directed characters of the author's earlier book.

"David Riesman's *Faces in the Crowd* is at once supplement, source-book, and case-book for *The Lonely Crowd* (1950). The two books together mark the emergence of a considerable talent in American social thinking. Bound neither to class-analysis nor to Freudianism, unbemused by attitude measurement, able to make his way among the social sciences without worrying overmuch about the spike-fences marking them off, Riesman has a spaciousness of outlook that brings great promise to American social theory."

Max Lerner in the *New Republic.*

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whether the reaction has not been too complete. Mr. Howe appears to feel that Faulkner's violence and frequent obscurity are not to be seriously questioned by the critic.) Mr. Howe's book is distinguished, as was his *Sherwood Anderson,* by a high degree of intelligence and an engagingly witty sense of the concrete and comic aspects of life. There is also a fine sense of historical tragedy, although accompanying this latter there is an implied insistence on the artist's duty of "rendering . . . the social disorder particular to our time" which appears to emerge so directly from the author's own ideological preoccupations as to hamper, on one or two occasions, the free operation of his taste.

Among the many services this book performs is to confront the question of whether Faulkner is, like Balzac, a novelist who chronicles the vicissitudes of the class structure, and to conclude that "clan rather than class forms the basic social unit in Faulkner's world." Mr. Howe also deals authoritatively with the question of Faulkner's "myth of the South." His book will encounter opposition from those many critics who believe that Faulkner's myth, and myth in general, arises from some underlying ritual and expresses itself in a hierarchy of metaphysical or moral values. Admitting the obvious fact that there are many mythic elements in Faulkner's stories, Mr. Howe points to the illogicality of finding a fixed or hierarchal myth in a Southern author who nowhere presents any "copious or lively image of the Old South" and whose work contains "almost every conceivable attitude toward the South." All this is very salutary, as is the author's argument that Faulkner is not, or not consistently, a "traditional Christian moralist." I shudder with Mr. Howe whenever the latest pious young person writes an essay expressing his religious view of life and happily quotes Faulkner as if Faulkner had produced, not a mixed collection of tales and romances, but a Divine Comedy of the South. Nevertheless I can't help feeling that Mr. Howe's zeal against the traditional critics makes him discount the genuine elements of traditional morality in such works as *The Bear, Old Man, Light in August,* and *As I Lay Dying*—not that this morality is perfectly consistent or even very clear; certainly it has no systematized mythic or theological sanction; but it is there, urging honor and self-sacrifice and alleging the authority of the past or nature or, as in *The Bear,* a numinous divinity.

One is both enlightened and convinced by Mr. Howe's account of *Sanctuary* as a "social charade" (though a poor one) which is not meant to be merely shocking but is "moralistic to a fault," and by his description of the ambiguously Negro-White Joe Christmas (of *Light in August*) as a "helpless victim" who "tries to determine his identity and break through to freedom." The question of Faulkner and the Negroes is brilliantly treated in a single sustained chapter (see COMMENTARY, October 1951). And the reader will find excellent passages dealing with such matters as Faulkner's use of the characteristically American pastoral myth—to be discerned in Cooper, Melville, and Mark Twain—which depicts the primal wilderness as the "source and scene of mobility, freedom, innocence" and teaches a resentment of women because they are the agents of the social order which violates the pastoral dream. Finally, for the pleasure of recording it, as well as to suggest that there are many such interesting passages in the book, I quote this from Mr. Howe's discussion of *Light in August:* "The arrangement of the book . . . resembles an early Renaissance painting—in the foreground a bleeding martyr, far to the rear a scene of bucolic peacefulness, with women quietly working in the fields."

I have one fundamental disagreement with Mr. Howe, which may be suggested by saying that to me his presentation of *The Sound and the Fury* as Faulkner's masterpiece does not seem correct. This judgment is equivalent to the one which prefers *The House of the Seven Gables* to all the other works of Hawthorne. It is a judgment demanded by a view of social history and a concern for ideological authenticity rather than by the sure sensibility which usually serves Mr. Howe so well. And it seems to me to belie those passages of the book which discuss the shortcomings of Faulkner as a "social novelist." Mr. Howe is right to praise the Benjy and Dilsey sections of the novel; yet his comments on the rest of this disorganized and sometimes callow phantasmagoria seem much more eloquent and sure when he denounces than when he praises.

One is led to reflect that Faulkner's optimum form is perhaps not the novel but the approximately ninety-page fable, like *Old Man, The Bear, The Spotted Horses,* the Benjy section of *The Sound and the Fury,* the flight and pursuit episode of *Light in August,* and so on. May not Faulkner's masterpiece among the longer works be *As I Lay Dying* (if it is not *Light in*

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August), which, like *Moby Dick, The Scarlet Letter,* and *Huckleberry Finn,* is essentially a short fable with elaborations? At any rate, one is readily convinced by such of Mr. Howe's felicitously relaxed and concrete remarks as that *Light in August* is made "splendid" by "this abundance of representation, this copiousness of postures observed and manners poetically evoked," or that *As I Lay Dying* is "country farce and human tragedy." But one has a good deal of trouble with the idea that *The Sound and the Fury* displays a "classical economy of vision."

Yet it will be becoming in the reviewer, as it is in Mr. Howe, to recall that, as he says, "judgments about the work of a living writer must, of course, be incomplete and tentative." If Mr. Howe's book is indeed in some ways incomplete and tentative, it is also an indispensable aid to reflection about Faulkner, besides being, in its own right, a buoyant and perceptive piece of criticism.

The Judaism of a Radical Optimist

CHOOSE LIFE: THE BIBLICAL CALL TO REVOLT. By ERIC GUTKIND. Schuman. 312 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by EMIL L. FACKENHEIM

THIS is a paradoxical book. It displays considerable learning, but indulges in the most dubious generalizations. It abounds in deep insights, but also in claims which can only be called ridiculous. It is highly original and wholly unconventional—yet the central thesis is neither original nor unconventional: a religious and optimistic humanism based on Biblical teaching.

It is well to emphasize the valuable aspects of *Choose Life,* for the reader might quite understandably be frightened off before he has had a chance to discover them. The author's eagerness to find salvation for modern man in the Jewish spirit induces him to make the most extravagant claims in its behalf. We are told that while mankind today is largely perverted by mass hypnosis, "the soul of Israel is incorruptible"; that "Israel is not merely the late result of a long evolution. It is an intrinsic part of reality, from the very beginning. Because it is a maximal possibility of evolution, it is the very principle of evolution."

For Mr. Gutkind, the Jewish soul is perfect intellectually as well as spiritually: whatever is good in modern science is in conformity with it. The mathematicized Einsteinian universe is Jewish as well as progressive, because it is antimythological. "Emergent evolution" is Jewish because it refuses to reduce life to matter. And more of the same.

It is impossible to take this kind of thing seriously. One could argue at least as plausibly that the roots of the mathematicized universe are Platonic, those of "emergent evolution" romantic, and that both are *contrary* to the Jewish spirit, which, with its emphasis on the centrality of man, harmonizes better with a hierarchical, Aristotelian universe. But such an argument would be no more respectable than those of the author. The only correct procedure is to separate carefully scientific from religious questions, and to resist the temptation of joining together what the Lord has put asunder.

Nevertheless, the central message of this book is serious, and challenging. It challenges, because it adopts radically a view which the majority of our religious leaders adopt halfheartedly, though, certainly, this radicalism is directly responsible for at least some of the book's egregious blunders. Mr. Gutkind is a rare phenomenon in the mid-twentieth century: a genuine—which is to say radical—optimist as regards the potentialities of human nature.

TO BE sure, religious humanism, with its "faith in man," is a strong, if not the strongest trend in American religious life. But compared to Gutkind's optimism the present faith in man is weak indeed, and "optimistic" only because the optimum has been reduced to very modest proportions. The religious quest is ultimate; hence any optimism which is to serve as the core of religious faith will have to be ultimate as well. Such was the optimism of the 19th-century religious humanist, but the religious humanist of the grim 20th century no longer has the heart for it. On the other hand, he is unwilling to concede that, ultimately, faith in man is not enough, and that man must turn for succor to a supernatural God. He prefers to forget about ultimates altogether, settling down to a reasonable kind of optimism which is nicely supported by sociology and psychology: an optimism which strives and hopes for no more than can reasonably be expected, "human nature being what it is."

Choose Life refuses to view man as more or less dominated by natural needs, and has only

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contempt for religious pragmatism, whether couched in psychological ("peace of mind") or sociological ("the needs of the community") terms. Man is a potential rebel in the universe, capable of choosing the "vertical way," toward a fulfilment transcending nature and inexpressible in naturalistic terms. In what is perhaps the profoundest observation of the book, man is described as an "open" being, open toward the divine, and capable of infinite self-transcendence in love and perfection. Man does indeed experience evil and self-destruction; he suffers from enslavement to natural needs. But his suffering is mostly self-inflicted; it is the result of the wrong choice. "The perfect world can be accomplished here."

While the tragedies of our time are rarely mentioned, they are nevertheless reflected on every page of this book; yet it counters the brutal evidence of what man is with a stubborn and perhaps quixotic faith in what man can be. There is something essentially Jewish about this stubbornness, and Dr. Gutkind is quite justified in believing himself inspired by Biblical and traditional Jewish teaching. His interpretations of Jewish doctrines, customs, and festivals have almost invariably a degree of truth, and they are often provocative and perceptive.

IF THE merit of Gutkind's book, as a piece of religious and ethical writing, lies in its radicalism, this very radicalism, as we have hinted, also serves as a *reductio ad absurdum* of the central thesis. It reveals as untenable every religious faith based solely on faith in man.

Since Gutkind believes seriously and literally that mankind could, without supernatural aid, bring about the Kingdom of God, he is compelled to attribute the melancholy failure of man through the ages to a conspiracy of truly gigantic proportions. The "stop-mankind movement" is at work everywhere, in politics, business, art, metaphysics. Its ranks include not only the universally recognized children of darkness, but also an astounding number of those whom we commonly regard as being among the children of light. Whoever betrays the slightest degree of "pessimistic contempt for Man"—the sole alternative to "optimistic faith in Man"—has wittingly or unwittingly a share in the conspiracy. This is a ludicrous oversimplification of reality; but it illustrates the straits into which a radical optimist may be driven.

For Dr. Gutkind, the genuine optimist does not merely believe that man *can* erect the Kingdom of God on earth; he also believes that in the end he *will* do so. Since this faith in future realization is on very shaky ground unless there has been at least some realization in the past, Dr. Gutkind must look for a historical movement which has more or less continuously lived up to his ideals. This he finds in the Jewish tradition. Indeed, he often comes dangerously close to identifying the Jewish spirit with the pro-mankind spirit, and almost everything Gentile with the stop-mankind spirit. To be sure, nothing is further from his intention than a Jewish chauvinism, but he is, against his will, driven in this direction. On the one hand, he refuses to dissolve Judaism into a general humanism, insisting on its uniqueness. On the other hand, he refuses to regard Judaism as based on a supernatural revelation; such a concept he seems to regard as semi-superstitious, and betraying an insufficient faith in man. This combination of anti-supernaturalism with Jewish particularism makes a Jewish chauvinism in the end inescapable.

Choose Life, genuinely inspired by Jewish tradition, challenges a disillusioned generation to "prepare the world for the Kingdom of God." But Jewish tradition also knew that man cannot wholly build the Kingdom, and that if God does not exist or does not act, man's attempt to build or even prepare it leads to tragic questions to which there is no answer. Thus the call to action is essential and irreducible; but equally essential is the faith in Someone higher than man. And this faith in God is not merely a factor additional to the faith in man implicit in the call to action; it arises in answer to questions which "humanism" poses but cannot answer. Authentic Jewish faith is more "advanced" than modern humanism: it understood its logical and existential implications before humanism came into being.

Two First Novels

A LENGTH OF ROPE. By MONROE ENGEL. Random House. 246 pp. $3.00.

THE CLOSEST KIN THERE IS. By CLARA WINSTON. Harcourt, Brace. 244 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by PEARL KAZIN

Two fine first novels, by two writers in their early thirties, these books have little in common

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but their mature seriousness, their competence, and a most moving tragic integrity. Thus in a supposedly dry season, when the review supplements and the literary magazines cry woe up and down ten octaves about the feeble state of fiction, Mr. Engel and Mrs. Winston provide formidable contradiction. It is probably not the job of one reviewer to quarrel with earlier judges of a book, but this is written after the two novels have been given their supposed due in the Sunday reviews. In one of the more powerful book sections, where a stumbling duck called fiction-in-general is so often and easily mourned, these books were paid small, almost grudging attention: a nudge from behind the cracker barrel for Mrs. Winston, who'd better watch out for her future as resident of Vermont; a hurried, impatient dismissal of Engel's "obscurity." Do those who write about Fiction read novels?

The intelligence of *A Length of Rope* gives it immediate stature, controls the subtle, thoughtful pace, sustains the weight of its complex morality without ever weighing it down. The separate worlds in which Engel's characters move—a small, depressing mental hospital on the western bank of the Hudson, an Italian slum in downtown New York, the changelessly comfortable apartments and country houses that stand for success—are all presented with skilled visual authority, and the moral pressure within and upon each of the characters is controlled with great openness and energy, with an unmistakable certainty of direction.

For twelve years Ratcliff Pippin has come to the asylum, Greenwood, in pursuit of a desolate, unchanging failure—concentrating all his energy on his idiot son, Edgar, in a weekly plea for recognition, and receiving nothing in return. Having fathered this inert flesh, Pippin has forfeited all other humanity to his one guilty, obsessive responsibility. But he in turn becomes an object of obsession for two other people who are spelling out their private desperations at Greenwood. To Sheila Braun, a promiscuous and perpetually disappointed nurse, Pippin and his son promise, and for a time even fulfill, a need for status, for a stability through giving, which has evaded her before. To Alexander Forward, who dominates the novel symbolically and actually through his enormous size and the raging pitch of his restless pride, Pippin becomes the target of an unholy determination. Forward (the name has a brilliant irony) has thrown everything away—success, wife, children—in the attempt to match his lust for the absorbing boldness of violence. From the thoroughness of his rejections he derives a pride that permits him to make for others, like Sheila and Pippin, those decisions of violence which they have not chosen to demand of themselves. Even after Sheila and Pippin marry, taking Edgar away from the abnormal safety of Greenwood, Forward must stalk them to kill Edgar and thus annihilate the proof of their dedication. Engel controls this stern struggle without forcing it to a sleek or abstract conclusiveness; the enormity of Forward's error is given the controlled movement it needs to come alive in the full scope of disaster.

Mrs. Winston's softer pitch makes for a different kind of tragic intention, which she fulfills as admirably as Engel does his. Her world—the bleak, ingrown life of a Vermont farm, a place where the heart seems to shudder in the cold of perpetual winter—is more carefully bounded, brilliantly distinct in the imagery and detail of the place and the people within it. She faces this pleasureless Vermont with an

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excited familiarity, and turns it about in a knowledge streaked with cautious love. And it emerges with great certainty of language, a sparing purposefulness of metaphor that brings the thing seen (a calf, the clothes of a farmer, the icy turn of a country road, the evil grimace of a gypsy at the county fair) into precise relation with the thing meant.

All this is used with decisive intent. Mrs. Winston drives the consequences of farm life, the relentless turning of earth, animals, and season, straight through to the heart of her story. The narrative is not, as some have tried to label it, simply "about incest." The incestuous love of Phyllis and Lloyd Dary is the climax of their life in the book, not its beginning or total depth. The people are all proud, innocent outcasts, who can oppose their bitterly narrow, circumscribed world only by driving themselves further beyond the pale. The mother is driven by the fanaticism of a steely love to keep her son out of the war; the father's work-bound, rock-bound life has its final harvest in madness; the daughter returns from a brief freedom in the outer world to face a gnarled and hostile native place which is nonetheless her only home. Only the son, whose resources have the iron of habit and a muscular simplicity of instinct, seems able to escape, in part, the doom which encloses the others of his family.

But for all the loveless and bleak finality of its action, Mrs. Winston's novel has an inescapable ring of life. The world she knows is there—it is never assumed, never hinted. The fiction that matters is always an examination, no matter how it is conceived or done, of human responsibility. And because Engel and Mrs. Winston know what to do with such difficult challenge, they have both written novels that matter very much.

A Cipher Who Went Along

ES GESCHAH IN DEUTSCHLAND ("IT HAPPENED IN GERMANY"). By LUTZ GRAF SCHWERIN VON KROSIGK. Tübingen, Rainer Wunderlich. 384 pp.

Reviewed by FRANCIS GOLFFING

ULRICH VON HASSEL, a German diplomat who was executed by Hitler for his complicity in the assassination attempt of July 20, 1944, wrote in his posthumously published diaries: "Respectable people were shocked to read names like . . . Schwerin-Krosigk among the authors of the decree prescribing penalties for the Jews. These men apparently cannot see how they are degrading themselves. . . ."

A reading of Schwerin von Krosigk's reminiscences furnishes yet another proof, if proof were needed, that those Germans (and non-Germans) who hoped that the lamb, moderate nationalism, would swallow the Hitlerite wolf were the victims of a peculiar illusion. Nurtured on Moeller van den Bruck's Teutonic utopia, the conservative German right lacked clear thinkers and, with the exception of Ernst Jünger, writers of any boldness or verve. There is nothing quite so dreary in the whole history of European party politics as the *mélange* of philistinism, xenophobia, and greed that they embodied. It was in this stifling milieu that Schwerin von Krosigk rose to eminence: a disgruntled Junker, something of a financier, a bit of a cultural man, he impressed the bosses of Hugenberg's German National party—for the most part hidebound, unscrupulous men of business—as much with his lively, highly exploitable intelligence as with his aristocratic breeding. Being a much traveled man—he had spent some time at Oxford as a Rhodes scholar—and so less of a xenophobe than the rest, he served as an excellent advertisement abroad; and being pliable, without a mind of his own, he could be trusted to get along with the Nazis (whose imminent seizure of power was no secret to the German Nationalists) and temper their hotheaded radicalism. As it happened, the Nazis got the best of the bargain. A cipher in the position of minister of finance was exactly what the Nazis wanted: a well-bred cipher, moreover, who knew how to blot himself out completely the moment he took office. It was men like Schacht and Speer who held the strings of the new economy, not Schwerin von Krosigk.

Weizsäcker and Schmidt, two other recent memoirists* who once played important roles in the Nazi hierarchy, were simply shallow time-servers. Schwerin von Krosigk has depth, but that depth is groundless in every way. Hitler could not knock the bottom out of his world, or replace it with a false one, since it never

* Weizsäcker's and Schmidt's books were reviewed, respectively, in the January 1952 and April 1952 numbers of COMMENTARY.

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had any bottom to begin with. And we are cheated, in this work, of the grounds of its author's thoughts or actions. There is nothing of moment he has to say on any head, including his own. Events passed through him turbulently, it seems, but without leaving a trace—or, from the historian's point of view, a usable sediment. He is hardly what Trevor-Roper once declared him to be, a ninny. He is that paradox, largely German if not altogether so: an agitated, tortured vacuum.

A BOOK such as this can appeal only to the dullest of tastes, and the reviewer is embarrassed to find passages fit for quotation. There is no flavor more difficult to convey than the flavor of insipidity, especially in short compass. But the following two statements may serve; they show how uniquely Schwerin von Krosigk succeeds in marrying depth of emotion with complete vacuousness.

Speaking of a diplomat whose skill in connivance and collusion was altogether beyond his own feeble powers, von Krosigk writes: "Laval's fate was to be a sad one. The terrible excitement caused by the war and the long occupation had to vent itself on those men who seemed guilty of 'collaboration' with the conquerors against their own people. Yet actually Laval was less concerned with 'loyal' collaboration than with the interests of his own defeated country, and he managed to fight for these interests in a manner both tough and resourceful. . . . If promises that had been made him were never redeemed, the fault does not lie with Laval: it is Hitler who should be blamed, with his contempt for treaties and that profound distrust of Laval he shared with Ribbentrop. . . . It was inevitable that among the men called to account [at Nuremberg] there should be found, besides criminals and traitors, persons who acted as they did from a sense of duty; whose only 'crime' consisted in what President Grant once described as 'failures which are errors of judgment, not of intent.' Future generations will judge men once more by their motives rather than by their actions. . . . It may be that his own people will never exonerate Laval from egotism and 'corruption,' but it must be said, in all honesty, that he was one of the first 'Europeans.'"

And this, in connection with Himmler: "The order of the SS was to embody the idea of a new elite, held together by a common style and attitude towards life rather than a common political aim. Here, as in no other group, do we find a true *esprit de corps*, a terse and pithy use of words, disdainful of superlatives and feats of rhetoric. . . . These men spoke a language of honor and loyalty, a language any soldier could understand. Himmler showed that he had absorbed his master's teachings when he propagandized the idea of such an order. . . . There were quite a few who, disgusted with the plebeian character of the party, searched for associations different in form as well as spirit. And it was by no means the worst elements that came thronging . . . to rally around the new banner."

The man who speaks here is not concerned with justice, nor compassionate, nor obdurate; he is not the kind of crypto-Nazi we all know so well by now. Not to redress balances in a world of unbalance, or to practice charity in a world of law, were these memoirs written; yet Schwerin von Krosigk is anything but an unregenerate sinner. His innocence is such that it precludes both virtues and vices: in a sense, his record—*this* unremembering record—is clean. Adam before the Fall, he has never left Paradise; and if his Paradise is the fool's, the greater the pity.

Of God, the Devil, and the Jews

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Eduard Heimann is professor of economics at the New School for Social Research.

Richard Chase's latest book is *Emily Dickinson,* in the American Men of Letters series.

Emil L. Fackenheim is assistant professor of philosophy at the University of Toronto.

Pearl Kazin has contributed literary criticism to various periodicals.

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This *I Believe*

by Hans Simons, *President*
New School for Social Research

"NOTHING IS AS MISLEADING as military terminology applied to political conflicts. They are not as simple or as clear-cut as is physical fight. For democracy, there is neither total victory nor total defeat. The aim of its struggle is not to annihilate the adversary but to include him in the process of persuasion. Even if this fails there remain the individual's personality despite his errors and the peoples' potentialities regardless of their governments. Enforcement is the last and the least productive of democratic methods. Truly, the decline of democracy begins when it permits its enemies to force their methods upon it.

"This process is already far advanced. We begin to accept over-simplification—the technique used by extremists of all sorts. In over-simplifying they answer a human need for certainty which obviously democracy cannot fully satisfy. They cater to a human weakness, namely, intellectual and moral laziness which any totalitarian policy can exploit to its great advantage, but which saps democracy's strength.

"The simple rules of war become dangerous delusions if we accept them as political maxims. The worst of all is the most popular: that the enemies of our enemies are our friends, and the friends of our enemies are our enemies. This is a fallacy even in international affairs. Much of our present troubles can be traced to the unfortunate fact that we applied it too readily during and after the war. In domestic matters it is worse. If democracy accepts this view it loses its distinct role in politics. This means that as a force in society it will eliminate itself. For eventually it will be left without its own friends, having yielded to its enemies the declarations and decisions which define its particular place."*

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* *New School Bulletin*
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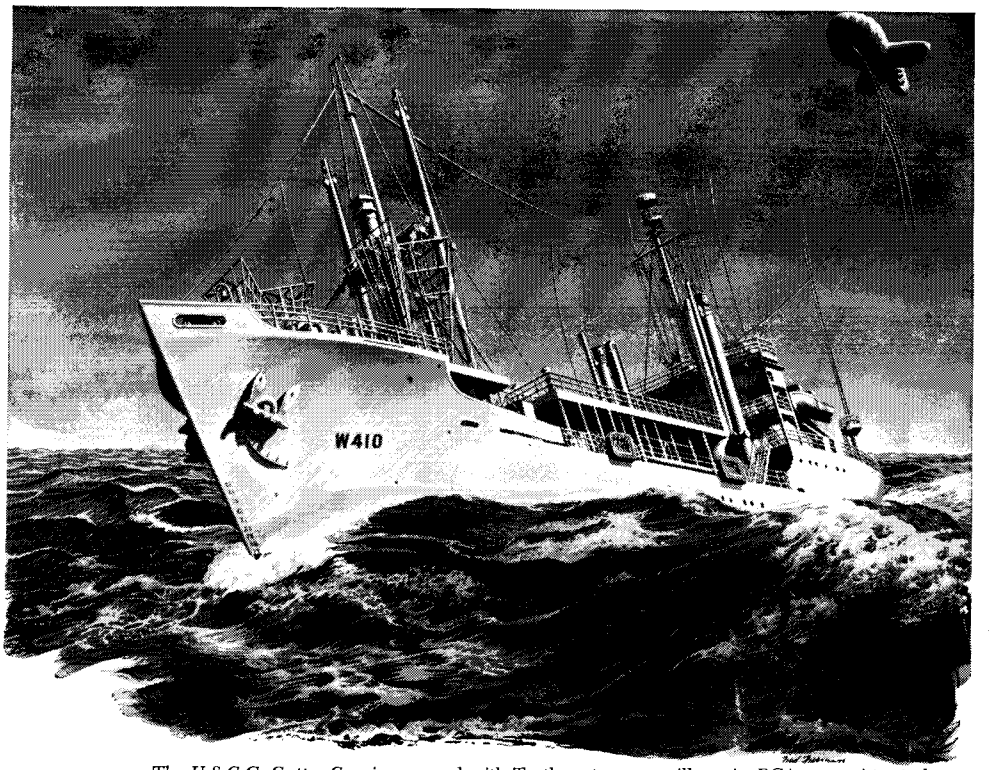

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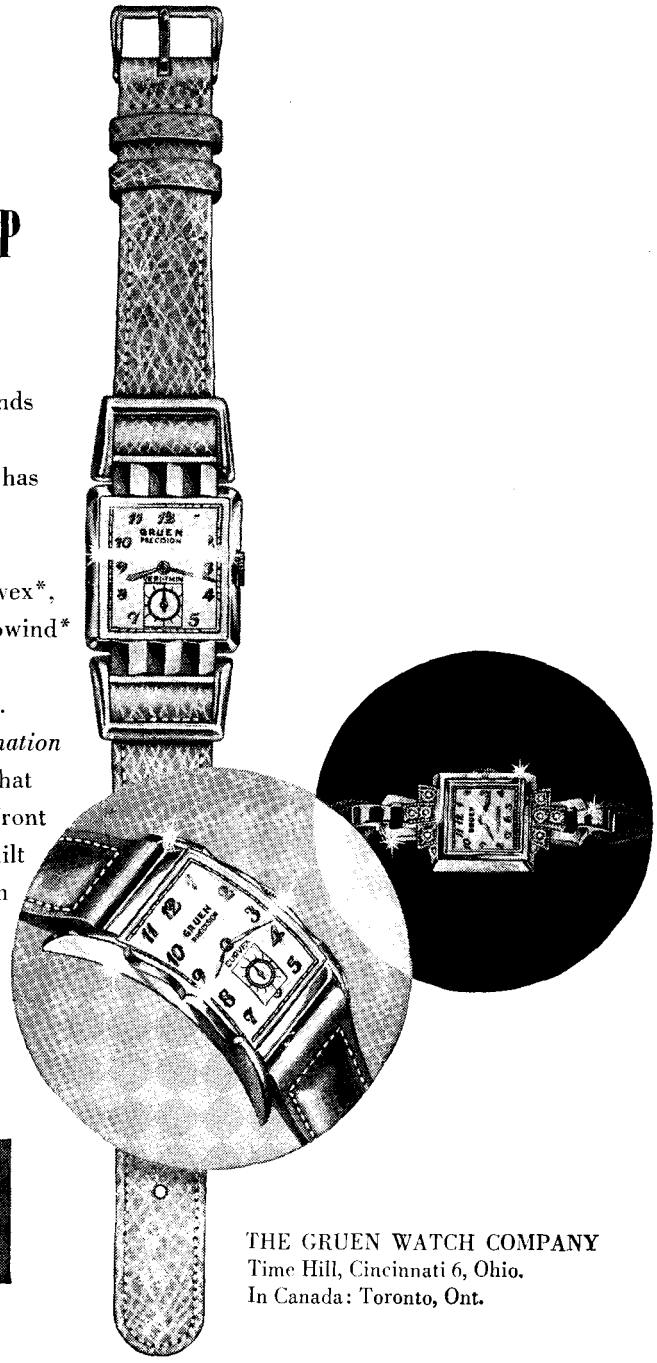

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